

Birthday Poems

of the Century



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Ernest S. Dodge

BIRTHDAY POEMS OF THE CENTURY

BY

ERNEST GREEN DODGE



ILLUSTRATIONS BY HOPE DUNLAP



CHICAGO:
M. A. DONOHUE & CO.

1901

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By ERNEST GREEN DODGE

To

MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER LIVING

AND TO MY OWN MOTHER

GONE BEYOND

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Songs of Enlargement.

Songs of Enlargement.

THE POET OF THE FUTURE.

Strong poet of the coming age, whose voice
Shall leave the vale of common things,
Shall bear the nations on its wings,
And bid the skies rejoice,

Thou mayst not tread where other bards have trod,
Who mid the silence of the race
With childlike voice won noble place
And turned our thoughts to God.

A thousand hearts now glow with lyric fire;
Each zephyr wafts a poet's song,
The singer's lost amid the throng,
The universal choir.

O thou who, winged with nobler breath than they,
And driven great by this same throng,
Shall pass thy fellows and be strong,
We wait for thee to-day.

While earth is choral with the multitude,
And in the anthem we rejoice,
We watch for thine, the solo voice,
The bard's estate renewed.

Be mine, my singing heart, to join the choir
That hymns: "The Poet's song be great!
Pause not at earth, try heaven's gate,
Bring down the sacred fire!"

Nay, more, so bold my heart is grown, I crave,
To be not wholly of the throng,
Myself to thrill a noble song
High up to God who gave,

And fill in part, O Voice, thy vacant place,
A few of being's truths to learn,
Into the great unfelt to yearn,
And cry before thy face!

THE CALL TO LIFE.

Two cotyledons, tender and small,
Out from an acorn creep and crawl.
Come, little oakling, grow to a tree,
Stretch thy branches over the lea!
“Nay, sweet mosses around me grow!
Nay, for aloft the storm winds blow!
Yea, and all that I now am dies—
Other leaves come if the sapling rise.
Oh, let me live as I am!”

Soul of a child o’er the threshold creeps,
Out from the mother-love’s infinite deeps.
Come, little heart, grow up to a man,
Learning to dare what a hero can!
“Nay, ’tis sweet to linger and play!
Oh, but I shrink to enter the fray—
All that I now love leaving behind,
Beautiful fancy of childhood’s mind.
Oh, let me live as I am!”

Idle prayer,
For everywhere
Strife is life
And life is fair!
‘Tis the God within unceasing
Makes the oaken heart to grow,
Life forevermore increasing,
Better thus, the angels know!

ONE SONG—TWO LISTENERS.

“O God! O God!

There is room in my heart for Thee!”

So sang the choir down in the Broadway church.

One little soul that listened answered “Yes.”

The smaller meaning of the infinite words

Alone was understood. “ ’Tis true,” thought he,

“Too long I’ve wandered careless; now I know

A God-forgetting life is worthless, vain.

No more earth’s busy cares and frivolous joys

Shall crowd Thee out. There is room in my heart for Thee!”

—
“O God! O God!

There is room in my heart for Thee!”

So sang the choir down in the Broadway church.

One greater soul that listened answered “Yes.”

“ ’Tis true. All things are mine when I awake,

Now sleeping; the seed of God in me expands!

All knowledge waiteth till I grow to it.

All pains which God endures shall come to me.

All joys shall follow, till the soul o’erflows;

My goal is God! There is room in my heart for Thee!”

PHARAO'S WIND.

PART I. TO SCOURGING.

I sing of a lonely wind,
Whose soul, a human soul,
Bruised with wandering, fruitlessly, far,
No end and no rest, lived on!

Pharao's life was gay,
Nine were his shapely wives,
Slaves unreckoned, un-taled his wealth;
He trowed that his soul was blest.

But the time nigh fell for to die;
For his breath did Osiris send.
"Oh, drive me not hence from this kindly flesh!"
He prayed, and gained his request.

Yet he died that self-same night;
They wept and mummied his flesh,
Uncovered a room in the un-live tomb,
And laid him away all duly.

But his wraith, it fled not away
To the realm of Osiris, the blest,
But pined as it lay confined in its clay,
His withering, prisonly frame.

Ages six, and ages,
Until, undone by the years,
Crumbled, decayed into dust that frame,
And the soul blew forth and away.

Away on the scourge of the gale
It hurried and swayed and swirled,
Bewailing its doom, through the gate of the tomb,
To the graveless pain of the future.

Aye, sing of this lonely wind,
Whose soul, a stricken soul,
Driven to wanderings, pitiless, far,
No home and no goal drive on!

Blowing o'er pyramid stones
And the lips of the ageless Sphinx,
Away, uneased, o'er plains and seas,
This prayer through the air did breathe:

"Hear, O Isis, hear!
For *I* am Pharaoh's life!
I craved to live, and ye gave me *this*,
And mocked, ye gods, at my wish!"

Blowing the sea-brine over,
Fleeing the land at eve,
And back by day o'er the sandy waste—
So whiled the life of the waif.

“Hear, Ra-Ammon, hear!
And grant what I fain would ask!
I prayed to live, and ye gave me *this*—
Yet I deem it is meet for my sin!”

And still did the air so whisper,
Till half of the age was past,
And the waif of a soul grew faint of its hope,
And the height of its pride was low.

Prayed, “Hear, Osiris, hear!
Though I be Pharao's life,
Who craved for inpius gain in sin,
Making naught of thy call, O King!

“Henceforth do I pray thee sore
To take me home to the Grave,
To the shore of the Dead, whose souls have rest!
Oh, answer, grant my request!”

INTERMEZZO—THE ORACLE.

Pharao, hark to the voice. Give heed, if so thou repentest.

Listen! Osiris is dead—worship the shadow no more.
Whom men's prayers call Gods are names for the Great UN-
NAM-ED—

Types, unavailing for thee—thou art a waif of the air!
Search, find one who in prayer hath named WHO only can
answer;

Find him, breathe on his face. Go, for it bringeth thee
rest!

PART II. TO REST.

The Moslem fought the idolater,
Warring a sacred war;
But the blade of the foe prevailed, and low
In the dust he lay, covered with gore.

And he cried, "O Allah, I die!
Yet spare me this day, I ask!
Some graven image I'll break if I live!"
'Twas a shadowy hand, once pierced,

Seemed laid on the dying face,
And the life was spared for a time;
But Allah nor Prophet—they answered not,
So Pharao's wraith fared on.



'Pharao's wind as it watched her.'

A sinner, oppressed with guilt,
Repented in tears as he knelt :
“Have pity, O God, on a sick soul lost !
O Jesus, on thee I call !”

And pardon was sealed in his heart ;
Oh, peace, like a river, most sweet !
“To the Giver,” quoth Pharao, “*this* man prayeth,”
And breathed on his features—in vain.

Madonna, the mother of sorrows !
Another, bereft and dumb,
Once knelt at her image, too whelmed for tears ;
Moved idly her silent lips.

Then weeping came for relief,
Since twain had share in the ache ;
And the air, as it watched her, fanned her locks,
But his fate yet drave him on.

And still, though many the years,
And many that prayed and were blest,
The name of the FATHER the wraith found not,
And the search went earnestly on.

Mountains, and silence, and clouds,
And a ride through the forest night,
And water that poured through the gorge below,
And trust and love in a soul ;

And the heart, with the night surcharged,
Drew nigh to the central Life;
"With bended form I bless thee, O God!"
To the waiting wraith 'twas nought.

A student, a doubting recluse,
Who had found no gleam through the cloud,
Sat weary with failure; and streaks of gray
Had come 'bove the hungry face.

And he thought of the grave and faltered,
And spake, "Be propitious, O Fate!"
And his spirit grew calm, but still roved on
The waif that waited and watched.

But there lay one dead in his chamber.
And when shall he wake again?
And say, shall he rise as the same, same life,
And his memory heavy with time?

Or to woo, like a child, all anew
The ties that before he had prized?
To the hopeful and long unknown he is gone;
And the dead hath met his GOD.

On the white lips lingered a smile,
For the spirit had passed from ill;
And the air seemed held of a tranquil spell,
And an ancient wraith found rest.

THE LADDER OF CONVERSION.

INTRODUCTION.

'Tis nature's law myself to save,
Yet sacrifice is law divine.
But may the twain in one combine?
God ne'er conflicting mandates gave.
Then who am I in widest life—
That thing whose wrong I keenly feel,
Whose every good I count my weal,
Whose goal is mine, and mine its strife?
Give answer, sinners blind, supine.
Give answer, saints, whose joy is real.

First Soul. The Pleasure-seeker.

I am the current hour—why more?
I'll taste my fill of frothy joy;
No conscience giveth me annoy.
What care I now for days of yore?
What care I if the future cloy?
'Twill not be *I* when the joy is o'er.

Second Soul. The Fortune-seeker.

I am the years to come. My aim
Is present saving, future wealth.
I'm temperate for future health.
I do the right to win good name.
No present folly shall by stealth
Defraud me of success and fame.

Third Soul. The Heaven-seeker.

I am a soul that never dies.
I'll patient tread this vale of tears,
Which hell has sown with gloomy fears;
I'll choke the sins that in me rise,
And serve the Master all my years,
To win a mansion in the skies.

Fourth Soul. The Transmigrationist.

I am a life that's yet unborn,
Beyond the stream Forgetfulness.
I'll penance do that life to bless.
My self and heir is he. I'd scorn
To will him aught but holiness,
Though I must vanish ere that morn.

Fifth Soul. The Parent.

As leaves spring forth upon a tree,
Joint fruitage of the sap and sun,
Yet with the tree itself are one,
So I'm the children born of me.
My course of life in them shall run,
And hopes denied, fulfillment see.

Sixth Soul. The Teacher.

I am the pupils. In their mind
My thoughts spring up and flourish wide,
My feelings—hopes—are multiplied.
My cord of life with theirs is twined.
In serving them with self denied,
My soul shall true fruition find.

Seventh Soul. The Philanthropist.

I am the lives of all I meet.
All loss for them I count but gain,
For I can feel their joy and pain,
If seen or told of; murdered feet,
Starved soul of China's girls, my bane;
The drunkard saved, my pleasure sweet.

Eighth Soul. The Christian.

I am the Christ who died for me.
All things as his are fused in one.
To work with him I've now begun.
E'en should my toil no fruitage see,
And men despise me, hate, and shun,
My joy is sure—he dwells in me!

THE BIGOT AND THE TRUTH.

I.

The builders built the east wall of the house.
It was very proud, and said, "The house shall rest on me."

The builders built the west wall of the house.
It also was very proud, and said, "The house shall rest on me."

The east wall said to the west wall: "I was made first. The builders knew their business, and here is where the wall ought to be;
"You are a dangerous experiment, an interloper, a heretic, a thing out of place.
"The house shall not rest on you."

The west wall said to the east wall: "The builders were only practicing on you. I am their finished work.
"You are a thing out of date, a conventional survival; may the frost pry you apart.
"The house shall not rest on you."

And so the house was built.

II.

The old house saw new houses building all around it.

It said to them : "I am the house in which the people ought to live. They are running away from home when they go to you ;

"Besides, I do not like your crooked roofs, dormer windows, and new-fangled porches."

The many replied to the one : "Your plain gables are out of fashion, and your yard is not cut down to city grade. You are a blot on an otherwise handsome street.

"We do not see how people can take so much pleasure in visiting you and remembering that the first governor of the state was born in you.

"Besides, he has been dead a good many years."

Yet the city still stands, and no one shuts his eyes while passing either old house or new.

III.

The city turned its eyes westward and saw the pioneers on a thousand scattered ranches.

It said to those whom it pitied: "Your life is rough, your vision is narrow, your refinement is nil, your literary first attempts are grotesque.

"Your only salvation is in the time when cities like myself shall have multiplied among you."

The pioneers said to the city: "Your men lack muscle, your wealth is tainted by extortion, your delight in refinement is half hypocrisy.

"Our vices are natural, and will be good things when they are harnessed and controlled.

"Your vices are artificial, and lead toward decay and childlessness.

"Your only salvation is in the fresh country blood that pours into you."

And such is our America, once small, now great and growing greater.

IV.

Said our Christian land to pagan Asia :

“Because our women could not adapt themselves happily to zenana life, we know that yours do not.

“Because loss of identity, absorption into the deity, is not our idea of the joys of heaven, your search for Nirvana is a religion of despair.

“Because your weaver of mats at four cents a day is clad in breech-clout and eats rice, he is the victim of grinding poverty. Your caste system is to blame.”

Said the East to America :

“We have great woes and great sins. Perhaps you do not claim yourself to be perfect or perfectly happy.

“Our poor are more comfortable in breech-clout than they would be in Parisian full dress.

“Our philosophy, perhaps blind before the idea of the Christ-love came to open its eyes, is filtering into your land, and is teaching your Christianity how better to understand, define, and realize itself.”

And so the world walks forward, because standing on all of its legs.

V.

Our earth said that it was in the center of the physical universe.

Later it learned that the sun was also in the center—and Jupiter, and Neptune, and every one of the stars.

The earth said that it was in the center of the moral universe,
That the battle of good and evil for all place and all time was
being fought here ;

That the stars of the firmament were empty worlds, made for
us to look at ;

That because a man could not endure the climate of Mercury,
there is therefore no life of any kind there ;

That because we do not see the little men made of ether
whose nations live on the round atoms of our body,
such nations cannot exist ;

That because the stars of heaven do not realize that they are
atoms in the body of a vast mortal being with blood
and brain and brawn, with birth and growth and
social relations, no such society of giants of the third
order can exist.

Our earth, I have said, affirmed all these things, but it did
not prove them, and now it no longer believes them.

There is room for the Universe to be very large.

VI.

Our Universe said that it was infinite;
That was a safe statement.

It said that, because it was thus infinite, there was not room
for anything else to exist;
That was a rash statement.

It thought that between the two walls of time and the six
walls of space were crowded all things which possess
being.

It forgot that the Boundless ought not to have any bounds,
walls, or dimensions that can be counted.

It did not know that countless other Universes of matter
might be sweeping past and through us at such a
speed that we do not see them nor discriminate them
by feeling;

It did not know that the ever-present, speed-defying thrust
of gravitation, the wrecking-reef of Science, might
be the echo-of-the-shadow-of-the-breath of such Uni-
verses, passing us in all directions always.

It did not know that between the stroke of noon and the stroke of one by our city clocks on earth the clock of years in some other Universe might strike an infinite number of times, separated by intervals infinitesimal to our slow consciousness, but as real and as long to some other consciousness as our years are to us ;

It did not know that human free will, the wrecking-reef of Philosophy, might be the thought-of-the-dream-of-the-greeting of such other Universes, overtaking and passing us in the flight of time.

I, a man, am not afraid to make two statements :

Whatever I can create in thought, God can create in fact ;
God is not likely to have exerted less than the whole of His creative power.

Manifold Ideals.

A SONG OF THE FUTURE.

*Hark, my soul! I hear the voices, telling of the world to be,
Whispering of things supernal, past the power of eye to see,*

*Telling how the earth shall ripen, bearing fruit where soweth
now,*

Telling how ideals battle, wreathed at last a victor's brow.

Manifold Ideals.

A SONG OF THE FUTURE.

I can see the future coming. Manifold it draweth near,
Not as one, but many visions, some of hope and some of
fear.

Earth may choose which vision tarries, growing real this
world within—

Others passing, flitting, fleeting to the realm of might have
been.

For mankind is like a garden. Weeds and flowers of every
mold

Grow together, strive together, seeking largest room to hold ;

And the will of man divinely stands as gardener o'er them
all,

Choosing which to prune and cherish, choosing what shall
die and fall.

Listen, Earth, and choose in wisdom. Future time begins
to-day.

Ere the morning sun some vision, now in reach, will pass
away.

Look! I see a world of battle, man with man in deadlier fray,
Armored fleets despised as paper, guns of old all cast away,

Mightier weapons flying, diving, shells that crush the moun-
tain side,

Poison vapors past resisting, lightnings flashing far and
wide.

Till the armies grow the masters, sitting high o'er king and
state,

Serve their own will, not the people's, giving vent to pride
and hate,

Crush the millions into bondage, join as one throughout
the earth

In a compact of oppression, counting nations nothing worth.

Then among these mighty engines strife again shall find a
place,

For one army, more ambitious, seeks to rule the total race,



"Hurling tidal waves and earthquakes from its vantage in the skies."

Wins, and makes the other armies vassals low to do its will,
Air police to grind the nations in taxation's bitterest mill.

Still once more the strife is quickened, for one engine might-
ier far,
Rises to outclass all others in the tournament of war.

Till mankind is upward builded in a pyramid of woe,
Each oppressed by those above him, each a weight on them
below.

All in vain shall rebels muster, for the Engine o'er them
flies,
Hurling tidal waves and earthquakes from its vantage in
the skies.

But the doom is not forever, for the hundred in the cage,
Discontented, strive together—orgy wild of jealous rage.

"I shall be the king!" said Conrad, "though I slay my fel-
lows all!"

"I shall be the queen!" said Norma, "though the human race
may fall!"

In the Engine grim and lonely sits the cruel woman now,
With the bloody dead around her. She has brought to
pass her vow,

And the world rebels beneath her, and she fights it to the death.

Drawn the battle, fierce the carnage, till she moans her latest breath.

Now the world is free, but drunken with a license new and strange,

Slaves, that know not how to govern, or to meet the wondrous change.

So an age of lawless evil lays all culture in the dust,
Ere the remnant learn through sorrow how to be both free and just.

Pass! Arise, O second vision, of a world fraternal, kind.
Competition rules no longer, but invention, skill and mind.

Social order, vast and complex, gives each life a goodly place,

Sacrificing self-distinctness, so machineried the race.

"Come, O stranger," said the pilot, "I will show this world to thee.

Thou shalt marvel, but believe it, all is real thine eye doth see.

"Thousand-story buildings yonder! City vast from shore
to shore

Covers earth, save where for beauty parks lie green or
mountains soar.

"Men a thousand million million dwell on earth in concord
rare.

None is stranger to his fellow—sight can travel everywhere.

"In my home I sit at leisure, need not wander through the
world.

I can see all sights at pleasure on the photoplane unfurled:

"Landscape lying fair before me, mountains planted far or
nigh,

Himalayas, Alps, and Andes, grand against the summer sky.

"I can climb along their ledges, look beneath, the precipice
o'er,

I can see Niagara falling, feel the thunder of its roar.

"I can hear all sweetest music, though 'tis sung in foreign
land,

Meet my distant friends as truly as I held them by the hand.

"Lovers seek their mates by method, viewing maidens far
and wide.

Authors bow before committees, who alone their worth de-
cide.

"Man is feeble grown in body, need not toil or struggle more,
For Machinery is master, and the day of sweat is o'er.

"Agriculture lives no longer, fields now city everywhere.
Whence the bread for countless billions? Chemists make
from earth and air.

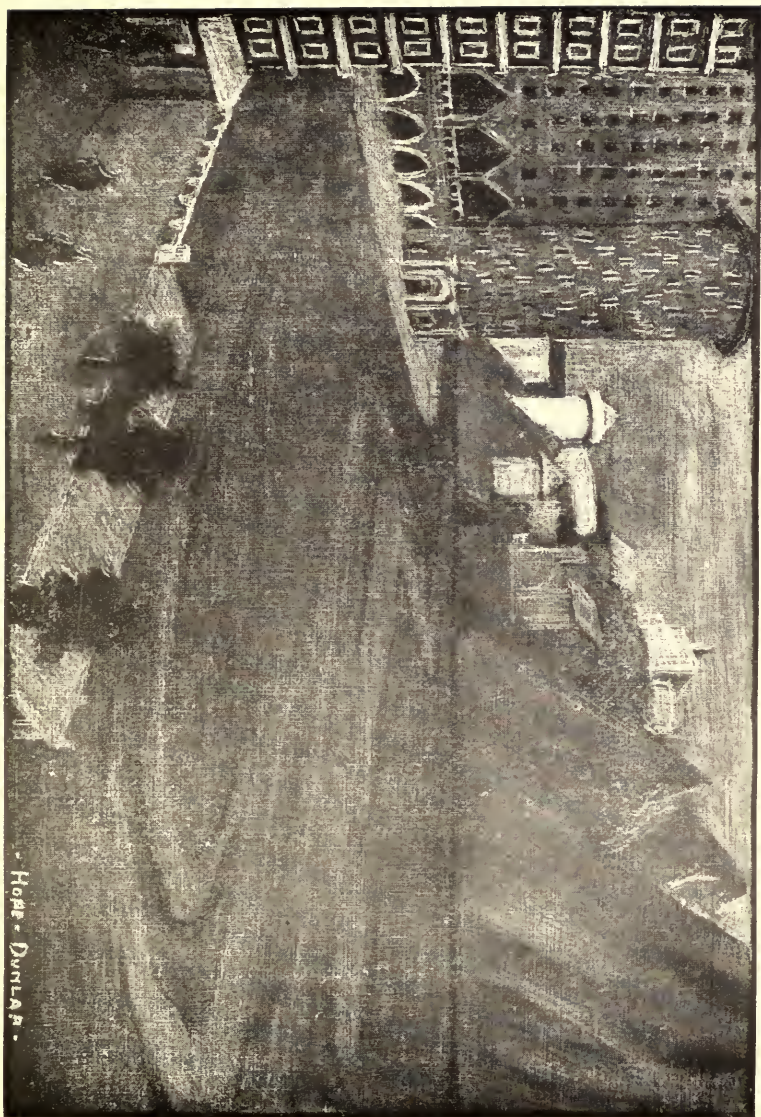
"In the tropics all is comfort, breezes cool that man controls,
While a man-born heat dispelleth snow and iceberg from
the poles.

"Whence the power for all this wonder? Not in coal or
waterfall,
But the stores of gravitation, tapped at last, abound for all.

"Not transparent absolutely is the earth to ether's ray.
One ten-thousandth of a thousandth, checked, appears as
gravity.

"Man makes hyperchem. 'Tis denser than a thousand
blocks of steel.
Disk on edge weighs down more lightly; flat, the pillars
'neath it reel.

"For the upper parts, when heavy, shield, make lighter
those below.
One disk rising, one descending, make the engine heave
and throe.



"City vast from shore to shore."

- Hope - Dunlap -

“ ‘Tide-power,’ ‘moon-power,’ not by ‘horse-power,’ do men
measure force to-day.”

So the pilot ends his story, and the vision fades away.

Look! a picture horrid follows of an earth despoiled and
bare,

Frozen oceans dead and lonely; gone is life and warmth
and air!

From Atlantic to Pacific not a tree or flower seen,
Not a ruin of man’s building—rocks, with chasms foul be-
tween!

Was it war that slew the people, stripping earth at one
fell stroke,

When the continental thunders of some huge artillery
spoke?

Was it time’s refrigeration, when a million years are past,
Cooling, killing, cracking, wrecking, making earth a moon
at last?

Was it accidental error in some too ambitious plan,
Using powers past controlling, shuddering loose, a doom
for man?

Or perchance the race grew zealous to bring earth and
moon more nigh,
Lend her of our air and moisture, pleasure house for man
on high.

So their gravitation engines, multiplied, began to lift,
With their vasty palpitations slowly drew the earth adrift.

Did it thus forsake its orbit, climb to perils unforeseen,
Till some comet straying struck it, swept it dead and cold
and clean?

Whence, oh! whence the mighty ruin? Though we guess
our guesses fail.
We shall never know the story. Planets dead can tell no
tale.

Rise another, choicer vision, of a world 'neath freedom's
sway.
"Be thyself!" "Molest not others!" These two proverbs
all obey.

One crime only now is punished, meddling with another's
ways.
Live the frogs, are slain mosquitoes. Missionaries win no
praise.

Progress comes with halting footstep, for each life expands
alone.

Tribes the same in former ages now are widely separate
grown.

No two towns alike in custom, no two lands alike in speech.
Highest joy of man is travel—see what different lives may
teach.

Various houses. Comely dugouts, roomy, safe from sun
and storm.

Palaces a thousand chambers elsewhere rise in pyramid
form.

Soldier builds himself a castle, tower and battlement and
moat.

Sailor's home upon the seashore bears a likeness to his boat.

Woodman's cot in form of tree trunk, 'neath a shade by
foliage lent;

Savages still bide in wigwams, Bedouin sheik still loves
his tent.

Various dress. Some clad Parisian, others wearing mats of
grass,

Some a coat of gaudy colors, some a mail of polished brass.

Some, o'er-modest, hide their figures in a cage that goes on wheels,

Arms and limbs alike concealing. Some wear hats that reach their heels.



"Woodman's cot."

Cultured Zealanders are naked, rich tattooing, pictures rare. Elsewhere Grecian garb is fashion—flowing, arm and shoulder bare.

Various manners. Some live silent, meet for converse once a year.

Some six days in seven gossip, labor one, though want be near.

Some are trothed while in the cradle, others on their dying day.

Some live misers, tattered, hungry. Some give all their wealth away.

Various races. Some are giants, twice the common height of man.

Others dwarf; some blubbery, swinish; slender some, their waist a span.

Various talents, work divided. Gifts augment from sire to son.

Acrobats that leap o'er houses. Others like the whirlwind run.

Scientists, nigh deaf to music; calculators, color-blind;
Painters, nearly void of language; specialists of every kind.

Yet amid so great confusion perfect men are also found,
Kind, big-hearted, brainy, brawny, every fiber clean and sound.

Such the world if each man follows just the bent that in him lies.

Some live happy in the gutter, curse the hand that bids them rise.

Those who climb must climb unaided, gathering strength
along the way,
Interesting folk, slow progress, philosophic anarchy.

Hark! a vision-voice comes ringing from a self-perfecting
earth.

“Let the best alone have being! Fools—what right have
they to birth?

“Better die than live a weakling! Happier thou as empty
space,

Where some higher soul may flourish, than to live, thine own
disgrace.

“Twain the goal of man’s achievement, power of Mind and
perfect Health.

Let invention serve but little. Be thine own most cherished
wealth.

“For the people—mark the wonder!—now have conquered
pain and death.

Half a million years the eldest, sages all, have drawn their
breath.

“How? Too marvelous? But listen. Death indeed still
comes to all,
But a new-born babe that moment doth the soul to earth
recall.

“Ere the newly wed are given joy of parenthood divine,
They must woo some aged dear one, with his life their
own entwine.

“Mystic arts cement the union. Dying he becomes their
child,
For the little one is birth-marked with his spirit wise and
mild.

“Sleeps the infant all unconscious, murmuring at his moth-
er’s breast,
Matrons all are proud Madonnas, cherishing a heavenly
guest.

“Slowly dawns his self-remembrance, yet he loves his pa-
rents new,
Mingling artlessness of childhood with a world-embracing
view.

“So the earth is bound together by a million ties of love,
And each life is rich exceeding, like the joy of heaven
above.

“Thousand mothers, brothers, lovers, relics dear of former
lives,
Still live round thee—thousand fathers, children, husbands,
sisters, wives.

“In the heart’s most separate chambers love for each as
treasure lies,
Ne’er commingling with the present to disturb its holiest
ties.

“Grows the age, so groweth wisdom. More than all the
race before
Knew or dreamed, each mortal spirit holds, and reaches on
for more.”

Such the world whose hope is centered on a bettered earth
below,
An aristocratic heaven, where the Best may ever grow.

But behold! once more the future breaketh ope with vis-
ions new
Of a world that seeks the many, not perfection for the few.

Where the soul’s most high ambition is a sacrifice of soul,
Not “survival of the fittest,” but “survival of the whole.”

Humblest animals are cherished for the promise they contain
Of a life that might be higher. Loss for them is counted gain.

Recarnation now is practiced not through hatred of the grave,
But to join the lower races, there to minister and save.

Emptying themselves like Jesus, missionaries gladly bow
To be born as fowls and fishes, dog and weasel, horse and cow.

And they teach the darkened vision, sharing in the brutish night,
Higher blood and brain infusing, leading slowly toward the light.

See! a flock of crows are sitting in a parliament of birds,
Little brains that now have mastered half a hundred human words.

They can count from one to twenty; they have heard the name of God,
Thinking Him a crow gigantic—sky of night His pinions broad.

Horses need no more the bridle. They can guide the plow
alone,

Working out for board and shelter, choosing where to make
their home.

Even fish obey a leader in protection from the shark,
Swim by day in close battalion, post a sentinel in the dark.

And ere long the worm and insect shall have felt the touch
of mind,

Percolating down the stages, helping each a humbler kind.

Slow the upper growth of progress, but the roots are deep
and wide,

Building heart-wood undecaying, creature motive deified.

Pass! The visions turn to shadow. 'Tis the present world
I see,

With its militant ideals, seeds of destinies to be.

Which, oh! which shall be triumphant when the battle years
are o'er?

ALL, I ween; through other planets man shall scatter more
and more.

Yet around OUR darling sphere one future shall have cast
its sway.

Ponder, Earth, and choose in wisdom! Future time begins
to-day!

The Twilight of the Race.

FIVE TALES

of the

PREHISTORIC STONE AGE.

The following tales are intended as historical fiction.

Thousands of years ago, when all men used ragged stone implements and hunted the mammoth, the cave-bear, and—their brides, our ancestors, being a part of all men, also used ragged stone implements and hunted the cave-bear and the mammoth.

In knowledge of warfare and the industries these people were doubtless inferior to the lowest savages of to-day. In native wholesomeness and capacity for progress they were doubtless far their superiors.

It is hoped that these pages may bring before the imagination, with some approach to truthfulness, this interesting early chapter in our family history.

The Twilight of the Race.

FIVE TALES OF THE PREHISTORIC STONE AGE.

FIRST TALE.

THE EPIC OF WYE-HHA.

The winter was long in Hangng-kwee,
The winter when the great snow fell.
Then were they of the kith hungry
For very much want of eating.
So did Wonketop call council,
He, the great chief of that kith;
And they all gathered in his winqwaum,
Even five fighting men of war,
But he, Wonketop, was the sixth man,
The strongest among the six.
The women heard them, also, not seen,
Sitting behind the bear-skin curtain;

They were Wonketop, the chief's, household,
The other women being not there.

And he, great chief, spake with his mouth,
Saying thus unto them, the men :
"My men who are of my tribe-kith,
War-men of the tribe of Hangng-kwee,
The winter is still long against us,
Spring not coming down from the sky,
And we, the folks, do go hungry
Throughout all of our six winqwaums.
The wild game like not to stay here
On the north side of the mountain ;
They like the south side toward the sun,
Where dwell the people of Wangng-kwee,
And they are more many than our kith,
So that we cannot dislodge them,
'And they kill game more than we do,
Filling with happiness their bellies ;
'And the woods have not enough game
To feed these two so great peoples.
Now consider what we shall do,
So as to be the best for us,
For we are hungry in our mouths
For lack of very much eating."

Then spake Tenkemiq, sitting there,
Folding his hands about his knees :
"O Wonketop, chief among us,
Being the strongest among six,
If thou wilt go yonder and fight,
We also will come in thy trail,

But if thou wilt stay sitting here,
We cannot all fight without thee.
Therefore hear what seemeth the best
To me thinking of our sore need.
Yesterday we ate that rabbit,
A small one, not enough for us;
Khauketau slew it near the thicket,
Throwing straight with his stone hatchet.
To-day we sit here all empty,
Being a thing yet worse for us.
But they slew yester-night a deer,
They, the strong people of Wangng-kwee,
And it hath become their food,
Enough for their three and ten winqwaums.
Now they are gone again to-night,
I spying them from the hill-top.
They are out hunting the deer's roe,
Scattered in four bands, not strong to fight.
So now let us go after them,
For to kill some of them apart.
They shall learn if our stone be sharp, too,
Seeing their own blood run down red.
So shall there be less hunters left,
Eating game from off the whole mountain.
But first let us fall upon the rest,
The women and the old men.
They shall rejoice much in Wangng-kwee,
When their women and young are all dead!
Then we can fill our hearts with deer-meat,
Till we are better off for to fight.”

Then spake Khauketau, strong hunter,
Not thinking the deed good:

“O Tenkemiq, are all quite gone,
None staying back by the winqwaums?
The women, too, have sharp knives,
And can hold a spear in their hands,
And the old men can fight somewhat,
Not having forgotten how.
I like it not to die to-morrow,
Though my heart be then full of meat.”

Then Khauketau said nothing more,
Being a not much talker.
But Tenkemiq spake with his mouth,
Loudly deriding him by name:
“Oho! Khauke-teeta thou art,
She-hunter of the tribe.
Thy hatchet is good for hunting,
Killing small game that run away.
But mine has cut into four men,
Strong fighters, making them all dead.
More men have I killed than any,
Save only Wonketop, great chief,
But I fear not many women,
Being a man who can fight.”

Then spake the great chief of the tribe,
Sitting close by the small fire:
“Thou tellest a true thing of me,
That I have killed five by fighting them,
And thou speakest well, Tenkemiq,
Not being afraid to go forth.
But Khauketau also will fight,
Using his knife, good to cut with.

And the others will all fight well,
Having learned how to strike hard."

So it pleased them to go by stealth,
Before the morning should come down.
But all the women it pleased not,
Hearing from behind the bear-skin.
Then talked Mauw-hha, the chief's woman,
With the old woman, her grandmother.
They thought the deed not at all good,
Although they were very much hungry.

But Wye-hha said not anything,
Daughter of Wonketop, great chief.
She had a bad heart toward her kith
For fighting the men of Wangng-kwee.
She had often seen Teeteeka,
Strong son of Tengng-teeka, their chief.
So did he, tall youth, talk with her,
She being young and a good one.
And she was minded to go there
For to be his woman in Wangng-kwee.
But he stayed now in his winqwaum
With wounds struck by the men of Hangng-kwee—
Siktaq and his brother hurt him,
Two men fighting against just one.
Now Siktaq had no woman yet,
But Wye-hha liked him not, small man,
And she had a bad heart against him,
Because they two had done that thing.

Then spake Mauw-hha, the chief's woman,
Folding her hands about her knees:

“Let me go and talk with our men,
Lest they die, fighting in Wangng-kwee,
For they have strong men ten and three,
Which be a very large many.
And they will come here afterward--
They who escape Wonketop's hands—
And they will cut our limbs clear off,
Being fierce, and stronger than we.
It is not good for six men to fight
With such a whole great nation.”

Then answered Wye-hha, her daughter,
Speaking, strong woman, with her mouth:
“Thou, mother, wilt not turn them back
By speaking words into their ears.
They are wild wolves which are hungry,
Not knowing what is good or bad,
And they fear now not anything,
Because they are hungry inside.
Is there no game for them to hunt,
That they must hunt men in Wangng-kwee?
Yet do thou go and talk with them,
If so it pleaseth thee best!”

Then she, Wonketop's woman, went in
For to tell them what was the best thing,
And her small child clung to her legs
And the edge of her buck-skin clothes.
But they were dancing themselves mad,
Lest they be afraid in the fight.
She could not turn them back at all,
Because they were very angry,



"And her small child clung to her legs."

And their hearts were on fire within them
For to shed much blood on the ground.

But Wye-lha's heart knew within her
What it would straightway do.
For Teeteeka lay wounded still,
She also knowing about it,
And her heart was on fire inside her,
Lest he be slain there, fighting alone.
So she took her light stone hatchet,
Which she could use well with her hands,
And she left the winqwaum by stealth,
The old woman not knowing why.
She thought she had gone to hunt small game,
Because of her much hunger.

Then Wye-lha went a long way round,
Lest her tracks be seen beneath in the snow,
And she crossed over the mountain
Into the wide land of Wangng-kwee.
So she found a trail in the snow,
Made by one of the four bands,
And she ran with all her strength,
Until she overtook those three men.
Then she told them the whole matter,
Bidding them turn back with haste,
And they left off that hunting straightway,
Because she had brought to them much fear.
But she went after two bands more,
The fourth being already too far off.
Then they went back to their winqwaums,
Taking their steps beneath with care,

And they walked backward in their tracks,
That their return might stay unseen.

Then they lay in wait there inside,
With their hatchets and spears all ready,
Till Wonketop and his men came,
Thinking to slay the young by stealth.
And those six fell upon them in silence,
Lest all be wakened from sleep at once.
But they, the nine men, sprang right up,
And fought them in the face fiercely;
And they shouted a great war-cry,
Even the yell of Tengng-teeka.
But Wonketop fought, keeping still,
Greatly scared for his own life.
It was hard for six men to fight with nine,
Besides the women and the old men.

Then Siktaq tore down one winqwaum,
He and his young brother with him.
In it was Teeteeka waiting,
With Wye-hha and two old men.
She struck Siktaq twice, hand and face,
Making his blood drip down very fast.
Then she seized him close with her arms,
Wrestling, strong woman, with his strength.
But he took her fast by the throat,
Trying to choke all her breath out.
Then rose up Teeteeka from his bed,
Coming, though much wounded, to help her fight.
He struck Siktaq twice on the neck,
So that he lay down dead very quick.

His brother fell, too, not alive,
The old men pushing their spears through him.

Now the rest had cut Tenkemiq,
So that he groaned and died straightway.
But Wonketop, great chief, dripped much blood,
Fighting alone, one against many,
And he could not strike them at all,
Because his legs grew weak under him.
So he fell down and hit the earth,
Having four spears in his one body.

Then did Khauketau flee away,
Only two, he and his brother.
For they could not fight any more,
Seeing their chief fallen down dead.
They both fled home, still very hungry,
Not wishing any more battle.

But the men of Wangng-kwee felt great joy,
Dancing about those four bodies.
Now Wye-hha danced not over all,
For they were men of her own kith,
Yet over Siktaq she danced much,
Having fought against him herself.
Then they sat down and held council,
For to know what was the best thing.
And all went over the mountain,
When the new sun had made it morning,
And they found the people of Hangng-kwee—
Those few who were yet alive there.

Then did Tengng-teeka, great chief, speak,
Standing, strong talker, afar off :
"O people of Hlangng-kwee, small tribe,
Old men, children, and weak women,
Why should we now fall upon you,
Making you all dead at once?
We have soothed our hearts for your bad deed,
Dancing at four whom we have slain.
How can you longer be a kith,
Having but two young fighting men?
Come therefore over to Wangng-kwee,
Being henceforth a part of us.
The women of the dead are ours,
Which is the best thing for us,
And your two men shall build winqwaums,
Making us ten and five households.
So shall we hunt game together,
Being at peace on the mountain,
And will be stronger to fight the Khangng-wengng,
Bad men from the far black river."

Then answered Khauketau's brother,
Speaking forth, strong man, with his mouth :
"Strong ones, ye people of Wangng-kwee,
Who are a very large many,
Tengng-teeka has spoken good things,
Pleasing to our hearts, who are few.
It was a bad thing which Wonketop did,
Leading us against you by stealth.
Hence we will come over to you,
Being straightway a part of you.
But lest we grieve for his dead blood,
Rising up some day against you,

Give us now return for his life,
By throw of hatchet over his blood."

So two men stood forth of the four
Who had put spear to Wonketop,
And the two men of Hangng-kwee stood,
Throwing from afar their hatchets,
And killed not them, but were appeased,
Seeing a little blood run down.

So these two tribes became one kith,
As it is even to this day.
And Tengng-teeka took Mauw-hha,
Having two women, as a chief should.
But Teeteeka took no one else,
Save Wye-hha only, good woman.
She was his woman all his days,
Which were many times ten years long,
And bore him children six and three,
Both men-children and women-children.
But the one kith is called Wangng-kwee-hangng,
People of both slopes, to this day.

SECOND TALE.

THE EPIC OF FIRE AND MUD.

The Yay-wee lived in a great city,
The largest town of men under the sky—
Two and ten houses on the morning-side,
Three and ten houses on the evening-side,
Four and ten houses on the sunshine-side,
And five and ten houses on the bear-side,
Six and ten houses in the middle-side,
And sticks in the ground on the around-side.
Their houses were not like our winqwaums,
Nine men could stand up straight in one of them.

And the Yay-wee were strong with their hands,
Making all sorts of things out of tree-bark,
And they could make hard things out of mud
By putting very much fire into it.
But it was bad for them to do that way,
Teasing the strong gods of dirt and fire.
For they made hollow mud-stones, large and small,
For little lakes to drink water out of,
And they ate their meat out of those things—
Not out of twisted oak-leaves, as we do.

And they made little men of fire and mud,
Smaller than the fingers of a man's hand,
And they said their prayers to those little things,
But not to the tree-tops, as men ought to.

Now the Khangng-wengng, men by the black river,
Were very sorry about the Yay-wee.
They were mad because they were so many,
Not being strong enough to fight with them.
And Vvoi-khoi, their chief, called them together,
Out in the woods in front of the winqwaums.
Nine men sat down by his strong hand,
And nine men more sat by his weak hand;
But he sat in the middle of them all,
Strong man, able to kill two good fighters.

Then Vvoi-khoi, the chief, opened his teeth,
Talking out loud to all his men:
"O my spear-people, men of Khangng-wengng,
Who are not afraid to do much fighting,
I am very mad down in my throat,
Thinking about the people of Yay-wee.
Do not all your hearts feel like rabbits' tails,
Because you cannot fight with that people?
When I was young I went to see them,
Gaa-gaa, my brother, going with me.
They live down by the other black river,
We walking four days before we get there.
Now they have many winqwaums down yonder,
Which cannot be counted all at once.
And they are not like our people,
But they can do strange things which are not good.

They can make strong stones out of mud,
By putting very much fire into them.
They make little mud-gods to help them fight,—
But I am not scared at four such men,
Because there are many trees down there,
And I can say my prayers to the tree-tops.
But now I will shut my teeth and listen,
If any man's heart tells him to talk."

Then Gaa-gaa, the chief's brother, answered him,
Rubbing his fingers on his nose:
"O Vvoi-khoi, my brother, strong chief,
My heart is not empty about those men.
I am mad in my fingers and my toes,
Because we cannot fight with them.
Have we not fought with the Tickiteetee,
Killing five of them, not dying ourselves?
Have we not fought with the Wangng-kwee-hangng,
So that they are afraid to think of us?
Have we not conquered the Snye-lippy,
So that they brought us bear-skins and ran off?
Have we not killed the four men of Zip-zip,
Making their women and girls our women?
But the Yay-wee have made us all afraid,
Ever since that big oak tree there was born.
Our hearts are like very small rain-drops,
Because we think they are too many.
Now listen to me with your ears,
And I will tell you a very good thing.
Let us put our spears under our arms,
And go to see the men of Yay-wee.
Of course we cannot make big war with them,
But perhaps they will fight us peaceably.

Let them stand against us, one against one,
And we'll show them what our spears feel like."

Then Gaa-gaa put his hands on the ground,
And would not say anything more.
But Vvoi-khoi, great chief, spake through his mouth,
Holding his spear above his head:
"My men, Gaa-gaa has told you the best thing,
Being almost as brave as I am.
We have done strong things to every tribe,
Save only to the kith of Yay-wee.
Now if we can make them think about us,
Our hearts will not feel so crooked inside.
So let all of you who are brave men
Put your spear-handles between your teeth,
But all who are afraid to go down there,
Let them put their spears down on the ground."

Then Vvoi-khoi put his spear between his teeth,
And all the men did as the chief did.
Not one of them put his spear on the ground,
For they knew it would be a bad thing.

So the warriors of Khangng-wengng stood up,
And they did not wait for anything.
They did not take their clothes off at all,
Nor dance any war-dance that night.
They walked straight out through the black woods,
Each man with a man in front of him.
But Vvoi-khoi had no one in front of him,
Because he was the chief of that tribe.
Two days they walked down that valley,
Finding the place where both the rivers met;

Two days they walked up the other valley,
By the stream that the Yay-wee drank out of.
They had not much to eat those days,
Not hitting the blue pigeons with their spears.
For they had left their stone hatchets at home,
Not wanting to lose them in the fight.
It takes many days to make a stone axe,
And it is very bad to lose one.

So when they came to that great city,
They were all very hungry and mad.
And they shouted a great yell in the woods,
Waiting for the men to come out to them.
So the men inside there heard the noise,
And they all came out to hunt for it.
And they found the nine and ten men,
Holding their spears under their arms.

Then spake Sellitoc, chief of them all,
Strongest of their five small chiefs:
"You there! we are the Yay-wee people,
Not afraid to do everything!
Who are you with your spears under your arms,
As if you were not quite ready to fight?
I do not let wolves howl out here,
Hunting for the game that I want to eat!"

Then spake forth Vvoi-khoi very loud,
Standing in front of all the rest:
"O men of Yay-wee, we are the Khangng-wengng,
Strong men from the far black river.
It is wrong for you to be so many;
Therefore have we come to see you.

But first give us the best meat that you have,
For we have come a long ways not eating."

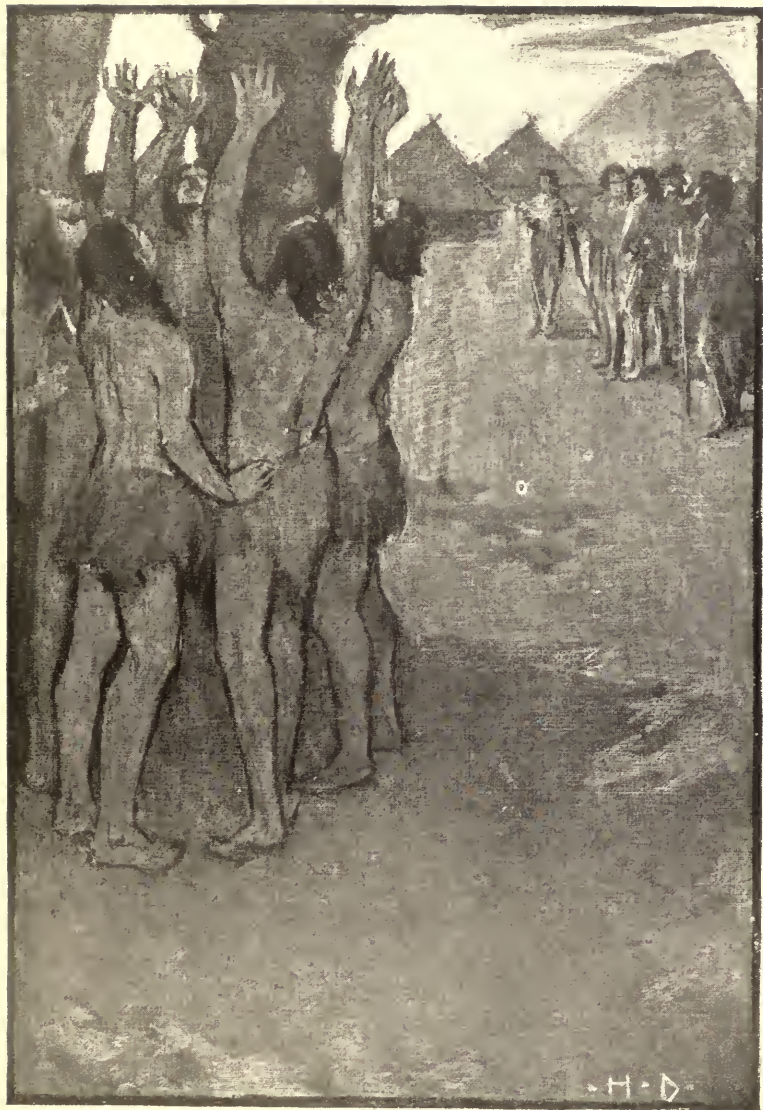
Then Sellitoc answered not anything,
But Sembic, best hunter, spoke in his place:
"O men, I killed a red bear yesterday,
And it has not yet been eaten up.
Now therefore sit down upon your knees,
And put your noses on the ground.
If you throw away your spears and do this,
You shall eat bear-meat, and we will laugh much."

Then spake Vvoi-gab, son of Vvoi-khoi's sister,
Not keeping still because he was mad:
"O Sembic, we have not come to talk words,
But we have come to fight with you.
I do not eat men, but I could eat thee,
Because I like deer-meat very much!
We cannot fight with you all at once,
For you are so many and so bad,
But let nine and ten men stand against us;
They shall all learn what our spears taste like!"

Then the Yay-wee answered not right away,
But held council together about it.
Most of them thought it was a bad thing
To let the Khangng-wengng fight with them that way.
They wanted to fall on them all at once,
Killing the life out of their throats.
But nine and ten men had their hearts better,
Standing alone before the others.
They wanted to fight them one against one,
Because that was a better way.

Then spake Sellitoc, great chief, out loud,
Though he was not one of those fighters :
“O you who have come to us like bad bears,
These nine and ten men will stand and fight you.
The rest of us will stand and watch you,
Holding our spears under our arms.
Now if all of you stay alive,
We will let you live and give you good things.
But if any of you fall down dead,
Then we will all fight you with our spears.
There will be empty places in Khangng-wengng,
Where you used to lie down to sleep.
But first we will pray to the dirt and fire,
Strong gods, that help us to make good things.
And come, my men, stand now in a round shape,
So that we can say our prayers better.”
Then the Khangng-wengng were sorry in their knees,
Wishing that they were back home again.
But they could not turn and run away,
For they knew the Yay-wee would not let them.

So the Yay-wee prayed to the dirt and fire,
But the Khangng-wengng prayed to the tree-tops.
Soi-pak, the oldest, stood in the middle,
The others all standing around him.
And they all put their heads back on their necks,
Sending the noise of their words straight up :
“Tree-tops! strong god-people! tree-tops!
Call the sky-fire, the sky-fire to come down!
Ask it to kill all our foes for us,
So that our spears will not need to bite them.
For they pray to their little fire-mud gods,
But you can make the howling thing come down.



"Tree tops! strong god-people! tree tops!"

Ask it to burn up our nine and ten foes,
So that the rest may give us their bear-meat!"

Then the sky-fire did not come down,
But the great mud-fire came from the mountain.
No man ever saw it come before,
And it has not come again since that time
It made noises too loud to listen to,
Walking like a fire river down the hill.
It was thick, like mud full of much water,
Not soft and quick, like other fire.
But it caught all the people of Yay-wee,
Making them dead very quickly,
And it caught half the men of Khangng-wengng,
Letting the others run back to their homes.
They were very glad to get home alive,
Because their dead comrades made them sorry.
But that mountain-fire burned for three winters,
Filling the valley up full with hot things,
And no man can ever live there again,
Because it is a bad place now.

So the biggest city of all was killed,
There is none like it now under the sky.
And no man dares to put fire into mud,
Making hollow things to eat meat out of.
It is bad to plague those god-people so,
For they get angry very easily.
And no warriors now call to the sky-fire,
Asking it to come and help them fight,
For it would eat up half of them also,
And it is not safe to make that prayer.

THIRD TALE.

THE EPIC OF KETOITOI.

There were four men in Ketoitoi,
 But there were only three women there,
And there were no children there at all,
 Because they had not been born yet.
For this tribe was a very new kith then,
 All of them having come from somewhere else.

Now Ketoitoi was a very large hole,
 Going down side-ways into the ground,
And it was always dry on the bottom,
 Not any rain coming in there at all.
And it was night in there all the time,
 So that they could see nothing except fire ;
But near the outside end it was not night,
 But it was early morning there all day.

Now Galg had taken Weef for his woman,
 Before they had been there four whole moons,
And Oteek was Wayma's man all the time,
 They having come from the same place.
But Alahla was a very young girl,
 Not having let any man take her yet.
But she liked to look at the two young men,
 Because they both wanted to have her.

Thus they all sat around their large fire,
When the stars had made it night outside.
All the men had rabbit-skins for clothes,
But the women had great eagle-skins,
And the feathers looked nice all around them,
Covering up half of their bodies.

Then Wye-wye looked at Alahla,
Talking out loud among them all :
“O people of the tribe of Ketoitoi,
My tongue is trying to say something.
Alahla is tired of being a girl,
For she is growing taller very fast.
It is time for her to be my woman—
Unless Pellemic there wants to have her.
But now I will put my lips together,
Hearing what Pellemic wants to say.”

Then Wye-wye kept still with his mouth,
But he took a fire-brand in his hand,
And he was a very strong man,
So that every one was afraid of him.
Then Pellemic answered him with his tongue,
Trying not to act like a scared man :
“O Wye-wye and ye folks of Ketoitoi,
I am the one who ought to talk now.
I feel very sorry all the time,
Because I have lived alone so long.
We all came here from the other tribes,
Because there was not enough to eat there.
But I would rather be hungry sometimes
Than to live alone all the while.

And there is only one girl here,
Which is a bad thing for Wye-wye and me.
Two men cannot have the same woman,
For that is not the right way to do ;
We are not bad people like the Gang-goo,
But we are a very good people.
I cannot let thee have this girl, Wye-wye,
Because she is good and her face is round.
And I will not take her myself,
Because I do not wish thee to kill me.
Now Oteek must tell us what to do,
For he is old and knows all sorts of things.
Not one of us has much hair on his face,
Except Oteek only, our great chief."

Then spake Oteek, best man, very slow,
Putting both hands upon his chin :
"O people, I have been keeping still,
Because Wye-wye is stronger than I am.
He is our chief when we fight the bad bears,
But I am your chief to tell what is best.
Now let me tell you what I myself did,
When I was a very young man.
I did not like the young women at home,
Because their faces and arms were not good.
So I went to a tribe far away,
Walking all alone like a still fox ;
And I hid in the bushes near by,
Till all the men went off to hunt rabbits.
Then one woman walked close by me,
Going to drink water at the creek,
But I did not try to catch her,
Because she had a baby on her breast.

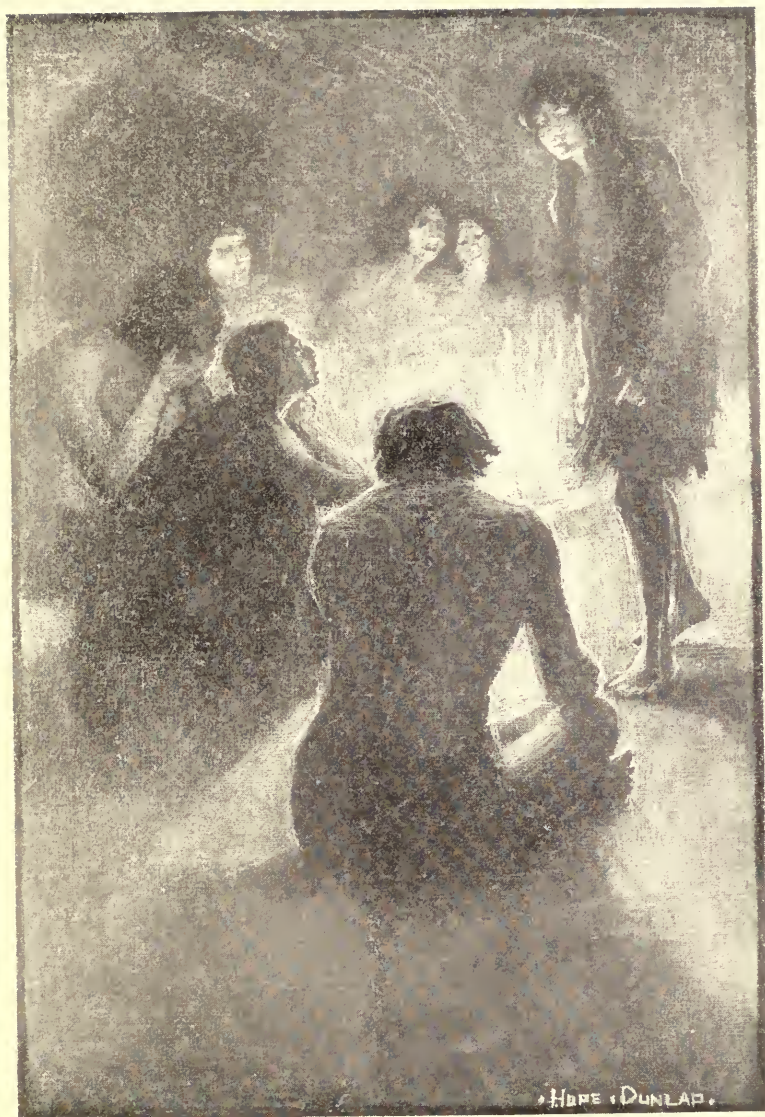
I did not want that kind of a woman,
Knowing that I could get a younger one.
So I waited until Wayma came near me,
Going herself to drink water.
Then I jumped out on her very quick,
Holding her mouth shut with my hands.
And she fought like a snake in a hawk's claws,
Tearing the blood out of my skin.
But I was strong enough to take her home,
Before any one could come and help her;
And she has been my woman ever since,
Being very glad now that I caught her.
Now listen, Wye-wye and Pellemic,
While I tell you what is the best thing.
Let Alahla take the man she likes best,
And the other man will do what I did.
He will hunt for a girl and bring her here,
Making us eight people in Ketoitoi."

Then Oteek looked at both their faces,
Seeing that they liked what he had said.
And they put their faces in their hands,
That their eyes might not twist Alahla's heart.
But Alahla stood up on her feet,
Going straight to where Wye-wye sat,
And she put her hands in his hair,
Knowing he was the strongest and best man.

Then Wye-wye was very glad all over,
Because the girl was going to be his,
And he began to talk again,
They all listening to hear what he said:

“Men of Ketoittoi, I am very glad,
Because the girl knows I am the best man.
Now listen to me with your ears,
Hearing what good things I know how to say.
I am not your chief with my hands only,
But I can be your chief with my tongue also.
Pellemic must go and find a girl,
But he must not catch her as Oteek did.
The men there would kill him with many spears,
If they should happen to see him.
And our tribe is not big enough
That we can afford to lose any one.
If some kith should come here and fight with us,
It would be a bad thing for us.
There is no other tribe so small as ours—
At least not this side of the great mountains.
Now let me tell you a better way,
Because it is so much safer.
We are not any of us drunk to-night,
So we can afford to do the right thing.
Let us all work hard with our hands,
Making stone axe-heads and other good things.
Then Pellemic can take them with him,
Getting a girl without fighting for her.
Her people will be glad to take those things,
Because men do not like to work hard.”

Then they all thought about it and said yes,
To do what their new chief had told them.
They thought it much better to live at peace
Than to make some other tribe angry.
So in the morning they all found flint stones,
Working nine days to make the good things.



"That their eyes might not twist Alahla's heart."

Four large axe-heads were all they could make,
Chipping off one stone against another.
But they made spear-heads, too, very many,
Twice as many as a man can count.
And Gahg made eight smooth spear-handles of wood,
Knowing how to use stone knives best of all.

But when they had done this way ten days,
They all got tired of working so much,
And they sent Pellemic away,
Carrying all he could in his arms.
It was a good time for him to go,
For the moon was getting round on both sides.
So he went off to the land of Fimfam,
Walking two whole days as hard as he could.
A deer could go there in one day,
But he had his arms very full.

Now Fimfam was a great hole in the ground,
Larger than the hole at Ketoitoi,
But the people did not live inside,
Except when the rain blew very cold.
They had ten winqwaums out in the air,
Because that tribe had been there a long time.
And Pellemic stood still, looking at them,
Having never seen so many before.

But Vessiloo, their chief, called to him,
Having spied him out there in the woods:
"Who art thou that I never saw before,
Standing out there and keeping still?
Come in here and put thy hands inside mine—
Unless thou art a fox come to steal things."

Then Pellemic came close to the winqwaums,
Putting his hands inside the chief's hands,
And all the people came around them,
Wanting to see who the new man was.
And Pellemic said: "I am Pellemic,
One of the men of Ketoittoi.
And there are not any girls in that land,
Therefore have I come here to get one.
And I have brought you all these good things,
So as not to have to fight you for her.
Now therefore bring all the girls before me,
That I may see which one is good enough."

Then Vessiloo said: "O Pellemic,
Thou shalt never take one of my two girls.
I do not want the chief's girls to go
Where there are no winqwaums to live in.
But Fayco and Teeleele shall stand forth
That thou mayst see what they are like.
It may be thou canst have one of them
If thou wilt do what we bid thee to do."
Then Fayco stood up first before them all,
Being a very tall young woman.
She was very strong in her arms,
And the eagle-skin looked nice around her.
And Vessiloo said: "O Pellemic,
This girl has no father living now.
Give us all the good things thou hast brought,
And thou canst take her home to Ketoittoi.
But let Teeleele stand up also,
Before thou seekest to say yes or no.
There is no girl so good to look at,
Because she has pictures on her skin.

If thou shalt wish to take her home with thee,
Thou shalt give all thy things to her father,
And for us thou shalt cut down ten oak trees,
Making wood for fire for all our winqwaums."

Then Teleelee stood up before them all,
Making Pellenic want her very much.
She had pictures cut in her skin,
From her ankles up to her cheek bones—
Picture of a mammoth with much hair,
Having its two big teeth very long—
Picture of a fierce boar in the woods,
With six hungry wolves trying to kill it—

Picture of a man fighting a bad bear,
Making it die with his stone spear—
Picture of four children and a woman
Sitting in a great hole in the ground,
Watching for a man coming home there,
Having a deer carried on his back.
And between the pictures were other things,
Straight and crooked marks, making her look good.

Then Pellemic spoke before them all,
Putting his hands in front of him:
"O Vessiloo and ye men of Fimfam,
I will have Teleelee for my woman.
I will work for you many days,
Cutting down ten oak trees for your winqwaums."

So Pellemic began on a large tree,
Chipping off the bark with a stone axe.
But Fayco watched him, feeling very mad,
Because he did not like her the best.

Her heart got very bad toward him,
Wishing she could make him feel sorry.
So she thought about it eight whole days,
Not saying anything to anyone.
But on the ninth day she called the chief's girls,
Taking them into the great dark hole.
There was not anyone else inside there,
So they could say just what they wanted to.

Then Fayco put her hands on their arms,
Talking not very loud to them :
"O girls of Vessiloo, our great chief,
There is something crooked between my ribs.
My heart makes a great noise in me,
Because the stranger did not like me best.
You know that I am better than Teeleelee,
Because my arms and legs are very strong,
And I am stronger than you, too,—
If your father were not the chief !
Now listen to what I want to do,
You going with me to help me.
To-morrow Pellemic will go off,
Making Teeleelee go with him.
Now let us lie in wait in the woods,
Killing them both quite dead by surprise.
It is good to do bad things to that man,
Because I do not like him at all.
And not one of us likes Teeleelee,
Because she has pictures all over her.
The men all used to look at her too much,
Forgetting that we are better than she."

Then the chief's younger girl said yes,
Because she enjoyed doing strong things,
But the older girl was more careful,
Not liking to fight with a large man.
And she said: "O girl without a father,
Let us not try to do this thing.
I feel black toward Telelee here with us,
But she will go off and never come back.
I do not want to get cut to pieces,
Not being so angry as thou art."

Then Fayco put her lip between her teeth,
Making the blood come out of it,
And she spoke again to those two girls,
Putting her fingers in their necks:
"O girls of some little old man,
The chief was not your father after all!
If you want me not to say that again,
Bring your hatchets and spears and help me fight!
Then I will cut half of my nose off,
So that the men will not like me.
The two best men in the tribe shall take you,
Making you glad to be their women,
And the man with one foot will take me,
Because he cannot get anyone else.
I am strong enough to hunt deer for him,
While he stays at home and makes spears for me.
Something is in me now like a mad snake,
And I must fight till I get it all out!"

Then both the girls said yes to go with her,
For they had begun to feel like fighting,

And they went that night out into the woods,
Where Pellemic had to pass next morning.
And they waited there, keeping very still,
Till Pellemic and Teleelee came near.

Then Fayco threw her spear at Pellemic,
While the others threw at Teleelee,
But they did not hit them at all,
Because a man had been killed there before.
Two men cannot be killed at the same place,
Because the dead man's wind stays there and fights.
Then they all rushed together and fought,
Striking very hard with their stone hatchets,
And they scared away the dead man's wind,
Because they made so much yelling.
So the man struck his axe on Fayco's face,
Cutting part of her head clear off,
And she became all dead with blood
Before she could fall down to the ground.
And Teleelee cut the youngest girl's arms
So that she could not fight, but could run off.

Then the girls ran off very fast,
Leaving Teleelee and the man not hurt.
But when they came to the town of Fimfam
They told lies to the chief and to his men.
They said Pellemic had lain in wait,
Trying to steal from their necks the bear's teeth.
They said he would have killed them all
If they had not run away so hard.

Then did the Fimfam get very mad,
Seeing the chief's girl all covered with blood,

And they danced the big war-dance that night,
Getting ready to fight the Ketoitoi.
They threw rotten meat, too, into the fire,
So as to smell bad and make them angry.

But Pellemic got home safely,
Making the people glad to see him.
And they all sat down in the great hole,
Even the eight people of Ketoitoi.
But Wye-wye was only glad part way through:
He wanted to have the best things himself,
And no woman there was like Teeleelee,
Having nice pictures on her skin.

So Wye-wye, the new chief, opened his mouth,
Speaking out straight at Pellemic's face:
"O Pellemic, the chief is the strongest
And he must have the best woman.
Now therefore let thy woman and mine fight,
That I may know which one I must have.
If Alahla can pound this new woman,
I will never take her away from thee."
So Teeleelee stood up out doors,
And Alahla pounded her with her hands.
For Teeleelee did not strike hard at her,
Because she liked Pellemic already.

But the men of Fimfam came before night,
Ten good fighters with spears in their hands.
And Vessiloo called to the Ketoitoi,
Telling them what the matter was.
Then Wye-wye, great chief, called back to him,
Knowing how to say the right thing:

“O Vessiloo, my knees are not scared,
But my heart tells me not to fight with you.
Now therefore listen to my words,
Flying from my mouth straight to your ears.
Thou sayest that Pellemic lay in wait,
Trying to do bad things to thy girls,
But I say thy girls lay in wait for him,
Because Fayco had teased them to do it.
And she will always be dead after this,
So that we cannot ask her about it.
Now therefore let two of us fight with stones,
Throwing at each other from a long ways.
If thou shalt hit Pellemic first,
He has told a lie and is a bad man.
Then you may all fight us with your spears,
And we will kill all that we can of you!
But if Pellemic hits thee with a stone,
He is a good man, and we will be friends.”

So Vessiloo and Pellemic stood forth,
For the speech had pleased the men of both tribes.
And Pellemic jumped to one side,
Not letting the large white stone hit him,
But he threw a small black stone very fast,
Hitting Vessiloo, great chief, on the arm.
Then the men of both tribes came together,
Putting their hands inside each other's hands,
And they did not fight with their spears at all,
But ate deer-meat out of the same fire.
And the men of Fimfam stayed there all night,
Waiting for the sun to make it morning.
Then they put their spears over their shoulders,
And walked back to where their own land was.

And thus these two great tribes parted in peace,
And they have had no war even to this day.
But they have children now, and old men,
And all kinds of people in Ketoitoi.

FOURTH TALE.

THE EPIC OF BIG HUNTING.

There were two nations in the blue valley,
One of men-people, and one of mammoths.
And the men-people had winqwaums,
Keeping the sky off of their skins ;
And they had clothes to put on their bodies,
Keeping their eyes off of each other ;
And they had clubs and hatchets and spears,
To help them when they made war.
But the mammoth tribe lived under the rain,
Having no winqwaums except the tree-leaves,
And they had no clothes to put on,
And their clubs grew out of their heads forward.

Now the tribe of men was called Belang-go,
But the mammoth-tribe was called Begoos-go.
And the Belang-go killed game and ate it,
But the Begoos-go ate grass and leaves.
So both nations lived together in peace,
Because neither could steal from the other,
And the men knew the mammoths were not game,
But big things having devils in them.
It would not be safe to make war with them,
Because the devils were so bad.

But there was one man in Belang-go
Who was not like other men.
Gargadog was his name,
Because he always liked to try new things.
And he spent many days in Begoos-go,
Watching how the big people there lived.
And he wanted to put spears into them,
Because they looked so much like game.

Then Gargadog sat one night by the fire,
Where the warriors of Belang-go all sat.
And they looked at him cornerwise,
Because they knew that he did strange things.
But Gargadog said: "O warriors,
Why are we afraid of the Begoos-go?
If I and my spear were big enough
I could cut the devils all out of them.
There is no game so large as the mammoth:
One of them would feed us for many moons.
Come now, let us lie in wait for them,
And find out what their skin is made of!"

But Stargol, chief of that kith, answered him,
Folding his hands under his arms:
"O Gargadog, foolish man,
Thou art not talking good things!
We could not kill a mammoth,
For he is bigger than everything,
And he has two teeth in front of him,
And a soft club to kill men with.
And I would not eat him when he is dead,
Because he has a devil in him.

It is not bad to eat the flesh of game,
For that is what all men eat,
And it is not bad to eat a man's flesh
If he has tried to kill you in the back.
He is a bad man then,
And we are very angry with him.
But I will never eat mammoth's flesh,
Because the devil in it would kill us!"

Then the men talked no more together,
Because there was a storm that night.
The wind tried hard to push them over,
And the rain came down and spit in their fire.
And the sky broke open very bright,
Making noises when it fell together.
But there was another noise in the woods,
Down the path where they always went hunting.
And the men looked that way, very much scared,
For they saw it was the Begoos-go,
And they knew if they stepped on their winqwaums,
Nobody inside would stay alive.

Then the Begoos-go kept coming nearer,
Having crazy things in their hearts that night,
And they held their clubs up in the air,
Blowing big bad noises through them.
But they did not step on the winqwaums,
Because the sky-fire would not let them.
It fell down just then right in the midst,
Making the mammoth-people all run off.

But when night had stayed as long as it could,
And morning came back out of the sunshine,

Something big was lying on the path,
Looking like a hill with wool on it.
And Gargadog said, "O Stargol,
The sky-fire was very good to us!
It has made one mammoth not alive,
Though it had more breath in it than all men.
And now we can eat its flesh safely,
For the good Sky has killed the devil all out!"

But Stargol said, "O Gargadog,
Thou shalt eat a piece of the mammoth,
But none of us will taste of it
Till we see what it has done to thee.
If it does not make thee to do bad things,
We shall know that the devil is all out."

So Gargadog ate some of the meat,
And he felt almost scared himself
But it did not make him dead at all,
Nor crazy and bad inside.
Then the others dared to make a feast,
Eating many days as hard as they could.
But they could not eat it all up,
Because only vultures eat old meat.
Afterward they made winqwaums of the skin,
Much nicer than their old ones.
They did not need a pole in the middle,
For the skin stood up stiff all alone.
And they made lots of things out of the teeth,
Big white teeth, longer than two men.

Then the Belang-go men liked Gargadog,
Because he had taught them to eat mammoth,

And they listened when he talked to them,
Calling them together by the fire :
"Men of Belang-go, strong people,
There is no tribe that knows so much as you.
You have learned to eat mammoth-meat,
Because I taught you how.
Now come, let me tell you another thing,
Which is still better for us.
If we can kill a mammoth ourselves,
All tribe-kiths will be afraid of us.
They will not come here then to fight us,
Stealing game out of our valley.
For no nation ever killed a mammoth,
Unless it was small or a sick one,
But we will try to kill Boo-goo,
The great bull-chief of Begoos-go.
Perhaps the devil's wind is in his mouth,
But I know how we can kill it out !
Then we can eat very much of his flesh,
(It is good for men to eat all they can,)
And we will dry part of it in the sun,
And part by building fires under it.
That will make meat to use all winter,
When we have to go hungry now.
Then we shall not be sorry any more
When our women bear too many small ones,
For we shall have enough for them to eat,—
If we hunt some rabbits also."

Then Gargadog said no more,
But the people looked very much pleased.
And Stargol, great chief, wanted to say no,
Not to go and make war with Boo-goo,

But he did not dare to say anything,
Because he knew the people would go,
And he would be the chief not any more
If the people went when he had said no.

So these men left the land of Belang-go,
And walked into the land of Begoos-go.
Each man carried four spears,
And some had stone hatchets also.
And Stargol walked in front of them all,
Because he was the chief yet.

Then they found the path where the mammoths walk,
And Boo-goo was coming down to meet them.
He did not know that they had come,
But he wanted to taste some creek-water.
So the men hid up in the tree-tops,
Climbing with their legs against the bark.
And when he walked under where they were,
They threw many spears down into him,
Which hurt him like thistles in a man's hand,
But did not make any blood come out.
But Gargadog jumped down himself
Onto the broad back of Boo-goo.
And he fell with his spear front end down,
Reaching very sharp below his feet.
So he made Boo-goo's blood come out,
While he himself fell off, not getting killed.
But Boo-goo went off very mad,
Wishing the Belang-go had not come.

Then Gargadog tried another way,
Showing the men where to hide in bushes.

And when Boo-goo came down to drink again,
They threw spears at his eyes, very many.
They wanted to make his eyes blind,
So they could kill him slowly afterwards.
But they could not hit them at all,
Because they were so little,
And the devil look was so fierce in them
That it turned the spears to one side.

But Boo-goo found the men of Belang-go,
Killing two of them very quickly.
On Tillip he put his big foot,
Making him in pieces like a toadstool,
And Stargol's brother he took with his club,
Throwing him very far against a tree,—
Farther than a slim spear can jump,
Thrown by a strong man's hand.

Then the hunters ran off every way,
Being very glad not to be dead;
And they were mad at Boo-goo, the great bull-chief,
And wanted to kill him worse than ever.
So Gargadog told them a new way,
And they worked hard many days to try it.
They found three trees standing together,
And cut one of them in two, high up,
And they tied the cut part to the two trees,
Using strong young withies to bind with.
And in the bottom of the cut log
They made a deep hole, digging slowly,
And in the hole they put a sharp spear-head,
Making it on purpose, fearfully large.

So when Boo-goo, great one, came under them,
They cut all the withies to pieces,
And the great log-spear fell down heavy,
Striking way deep into Boo-goo's back.
Then a river came pouring out all red,
Making him groan like the sky-noises;
But even that did not kill the mammoth,
For he had so much breath in his heart,
And the Belang-go were sorry and mad,
Having tried everything they knew.
So they walked back to where their winqwaums were,
Wishing they had not gone to Begoo-go.

But Gargadog did not give up trying,
For he knew how to think a long while.
And he talked one night to all the men,
Stargol wishing that he would keep still:
"O men, warriors of Belang-go,
Followers of Stargol, our great chief,
You all call me Gargadog,
Because I think of so many new things.
Now listen to what I will tell you,
Being a thing which will be good for us.
We did not kill Boo-goo, great mammoth,
Because we did not try the right way.
But come, let us work and dig a big hole,
And put sharp spears in the bottom of it,
And put twigs all over the top,
So that Boo-goo will step right into it.
He will never climb out of that place,
For the spears will make him all dead with blood!"

Then Gargadog, strong hunter, kept still,
Waiting to hear what they would say.
But Stargol, the chief, was angry,
Talking out loud between his teeth:
"O Gargadog, thou art a bad man,
Trying to make trouble for us all!
If thou shalt talk here thus ever again,
I will put a new spear through thy waist!
For I am much stronger than thou,
And I can kill thee very much!"

But Gargadog was not scared at Stargol,
But said what he wanted to, out loud:
"O men of Belang-go, strong men,
I will not talk here any more.
If you think I have said the right thing,
Follow me with your children and women.
But if Stargol knows more than I do,
Stay here with him, for he is your chief."

Then Stargol, great chief, sat still where he was,
And half of the tribe staid there with him.
But half liked Gargadog's way the best,
Following him out into the woods.
And they started a new tribe out there,
Called the kith of Belang-wang to this day.

So the Belang-wang made Gargadog chief,
And they dug a large hole in the ground.
And five of Stargol's men came to join them,
Because they had changed their minds.
And they all worked hard many days,
Until the hole became large enough.

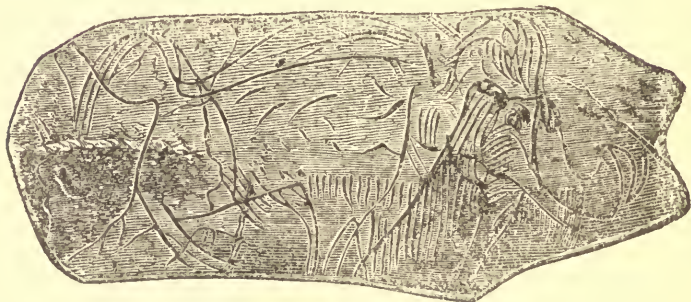
Then they stuck strong spears into the bottom,
Very many, having the sharp end up,
And they laid branches all over the top,
Safe enough for a man to walk on.
But a mammoth would break through easily,
Because he has too much inside of him.

Then Gargadog went to see Boo-goo,
He and two others in the great path.
And while Boo-goo tried to run and kill them,
The other mammoths staid back where they were.
So Gargadog ran to the big hole,
And all three went clear over it safely,
And Boo-goo ran very fast after them,
Not knowing there was a hole there.
But when he fell in, he was very mad,
Knowing that he would soon be dead,
For the spears stuck into him, way in deep,
Three times as many as a man can count.
So his blood all went out of him beneath,
And his breath went out of him in front,
And he could not bellow any more,
Because he was all dead inside.

Then the men of Belang-wang had great joy,
Dancing about the hole in the ground,
And they feasted all they wanted to,
Eating the mammoth's flesh over the fire.
But Waylee, Gargadog's sister's man,
Knew how to make pictures on mammoths' teeth.
He made a picture of Boo-goo himself,
Giving the piece of tooth to his woman.

Elfill was her name, the chief's sister,
And she wore it on her neck, to look nice.

But Stargol's men, they were sore sorry,
Not coming to the feast, of course.
They wished they had helped in the great hunting,
But it was too late now.
And they were afraid to stay where they were,
Living as before in the blue valley,



Portrait of Boo-goo. (Now in Paris.)

For Belang-wang was the larger tribe,
Having two warriors to their one,
And the Belang-wang did not like them now,
Because they knew they were cowards.

So the Belang-go, the few who remained,
Left the country to hunt them a new home.
They crossed the large river on small logs,
Sitting with their feet in the water.

And they let the wind push on their backs,
So as to get them across.
And they have never yet come back,
Though many moons have passed around since then.
Nobody knows where they have gone to,
But people are sure they have gone somewhere.

But the Belang-wang are a great tribe now,
Living in the blue valley all alone.
Every year they kill a great mammoth,
Which is the best thing men ever did.
And no tribe wants to come and fight with them,
Because they can do so much with their hands.

FIFTH TALE.

THE EPIC OF THE BOW-SPEAR.

The world was very young once,
And men had not lived in it long.
But it was dreadfully old at this time,
When the three tribes lived by the short river.
Fye-wye, Fing-wingng, and Fak-waq,
These were the names of those tribes,
But no one knew why they were called that way,
Because they had lived there such a long time,—
Longer than it takes a great oak tree,
Growing very slow, to get old and die,—
Longer than it takes ten great oak trees,
Each one being father of the next one.

And men knew more then than they used to,
Having harpoons to kill fish with.
And they had also little bone needles,
Sewing their skin clothes together nicely.
And they had tame wolves to help them hunt,
Running after the game very quick.
But they did not know how to make spears jump,
Except by throwing them with their hands.

Now Fye-wye, Fing-wingng, and Fak-waq, strong tribes,
Hated each other worse than large snakes,

And they made war together all the while,
Except when they were too tired.
It was hard to catch game near that river,
Although wild bulls and reindeer were plenty,
For they ran down from Fye-wye to Fing-wingng,
Making men afraid to go after them,
And they ran from Fing-wingng clear to Fak-waq,
So that Fing-wingng hunters could not catch them.
Men feared to go near another tribe,
Unless all their kith went, ready for war.
And things would have staid that way forever,
If something had not come and happened.

But Lalapoo, strong chief of Fak-waq,
Went hunting one day far down the river.
And he found six strange men hunting there,
He spying them from behind the tree-trunks.
They were not just like other men,
But were taller and had more hair on them,
And they talked like blue jays, magpies, and owls,
So that nobody could understand them.
And no one ever knew where they came from,
Because they could not ask them.

Now each man had something new to hunt with,
Better than all the spears that men have.
It was a bow of wood, like the new moon,
With twisted deer-skin tied between the ends.
And each had little spears, very many,
Such as men call bow-spears now,
Having two small wings on their backward end,
To make them go where they wanted to.

And right while Lalapoo stood watching them,
They spied a wild bull coming that way.
And they put bow-spears on the bow-strings,
Pulling the bows round, like a man's face.
And when they let go, the bow-spears flew fast,
Three times as far as a spear can jump.
They climbed right up as they flew forward,
And then slid down onto the bull's back
Crawling into his flesh very deep,
Making him a dead thing right away.

Then Lalapoo fled home, very much scared,
For he knew he could not fight such men.
Two times ten men could not kill those six,
For they could not get close enough to them.
And all the Fak-waq men were much scared, too,
When their chief told about the Bow-spearghy,
(For that is what they called the strange men,
Not knowing the real name of their tribe).
"My men," said Lalapoo, "my strong warriors,
Let us go to see the men of Fing-wingng.
Perhaps they will make peace with us now,
Although they have hated us forever.
For the Bow-spearghy will be bad to them,
After they have killed all of us first.
But if we can all fight on the same side,
We who dwell by the short river,
Perhaps we can drive the Bow-spearghy off,
So as not to come back ever again."

So these tribes, Fye-wye, Fing-wingng, and Fak-waq,
Made peace, although they did not want to.

But they chose to quit hating each other,
Rather than let the Bow-spearghy kill them.
For they all were scared at the strange men,
Seeing them hunt up and down the river.
But the Bow-spearghy men went off,
When the three tribes made war upon them,
For they did not want to stay and fight there,
Having their women and homes somewhere else.
They had small fights only before they left,
Killing eight men with their bow-spears.

Then they who dwelt by the short river
Had a good time all winter long.
It was much better to live at peace,
If they had only known it before.
They kept warm in their big holes in the ground,
When the sun ran off and made it cold,
And they had plenty to eat in their holes,
Because they hunted the big game in peace.

But when spring came, they had a hard time,
For the Bow-spearghy came back again,
And this time they were five times ten men,
Bringing their women and children with them;
And they brought all the things that they had,
Coming slowly, hunting for a new home.

So the three tribes held council together,
Being worse scared than small lizards;
And their knees under them were like dry leaves,
Shaking when the wind talks to them.
"My men," said Lalapoo, "and ye two tribes,
What can we do when things are so bad?

If we stay and make war with these men,
We shall all die before the moon turns round.
And if we run off from the river,
Climbing into the mountains and cliffs,
It will be hard to stay alive up there,
Because there is not much to eat."

Then spake Ashang-soo, great chief of Fing-wingng,
Holding his knees close together :
"Ye men of our three tribes,
There is only one thing for us to do.
Now listen to me well with your ears,
And I will tell you all about it.
Let us send men to all tribes far and near,
Asking them to come and help us.
I think they will come sore gladly,
Knowing what bad men the Bow-spearghy are.
No kith can live safely even far off,
Unless the bow-spear people are all killed."

Then all the warriors were glad,
Hearing what that great chief said.
But Upeenafud spake, chief of Fye-wye,
Not being quite so much scared as the rest .
"Warriors, let us ask good tribes to help us,
But let us not ask any bad tribe.
I should hate to have to be friends with them,
After the bow-spear kith is all killed.
So let us not send men to the Hhop-wop,
Because they kill folks after they make peace,
Nor yet to the tribe of Gang-goo,
Who do not do things the way men should.

For they eat toads and mice and grasshoppers,
Which are not good game for people,
And their men wear no clothes at all
When the sun makes the summer hot,
But their women wear large rabbit-skins,
Which only men ought to wear.
But come, let us decide quickly
Where each man shall go who can run fast."

So it pleased all three kiths
To do as this chief had told them,
And they sent men running to all good tribes,
Asking them to come, even from far off.
They went to Dalsop, Voilee, and Star-tar,
To Fimfam, Ketoitoi, and Wollipat.
They ran to Saap, Voop, and Tarnikiq,
Neewee also, Midwab, and Alookey,
Even reaching Belang-wang and Oshangk,
Though these were dreadfully far off.

And warriors came gladly from all these tribes,
Wanting to help kill the bad Bow-spearhy.
Ten times ten men came from the north parts,
And nine times ten men from the south parts,
And six times ten men lived there at home,
In the three tribes by the river.
More men stood where they could see each other
That time than ever in the world before,
And never again since that great day
Have so many men fought in one place.

So the Bow-spearhy stood on one side,
And all the good men on the other side;

And they fought as hard as two great lions,
While the she-lion stands and watches them.
All day long those tribes tried to run in close,
Dodging behind trees when the bow-spears flew,
And all day long the strange men kept them off,
Killing many of them, though far away.
But when the night was going to come soon,
They got together, hand against hand.
Then the Bow-spearghy were cut to pieces,
Falling dead in great piles of men.
The tribes stood on both sides of them, fighting,
And did not let any of them run off.
Each great tribe-chief fought and killed a man,
And the rest of the warriors killed the rest.
But there were only enough Bow-spearghy
For each kith to kill two or three or four.

So the danger to the great north world
Was over, never to come back again.
And those seven and ten tribes rested,
Making a great dance of joy that night.
And Upeenafud, strong chief of Fye-wye,
Spoke very loud for them all to hear :
"O men of all these tribe-nations,
I am very glad to talk to you,
For no man yet has had a chance to speak
To such a great ant-hill swarm of men.
We have put to death all the strange warriors,
But some of their old men will get away,
And many women and children also,
Who will grow up sometime into bad men.
For they were camping two days' walk from here,
And are running off now, fast as they can.

And we cannot run after them yet,
For we are too tired and too glad,
So when we do send men to chase them down,
Killing them as fast as they find them,
Many of them will keep out of sight,
Running safely far off, no one knows where.

"Now therefore listen to my good talk,
For I know how to tell the best thing.
Let each tribe find the men that they have killed,
And take their bows and bow-spears home with them.
Then they can learn how to shoot with them well,
And how to make other bow-spears like them.
This will be a good thing for us all,
Making us more safe than we were.
And when the children of these bird-talkers
Grow up big, coming back to fight us,
We shall not be scared as we were now,
For we shall all be bow-spearghy men then."

So this speech out of the great chief's mouth
Pleased all the men of all tribes,
And they did just as he had told them,
Picking up what the dead men had dropped.

And some of the young men ran next day,
Killing all the old and young that they could,
But they could not catch near all of them,
Even just as Upeenafud had said.

But Telzocq, son of great chief Lalapoo,
Brought a bird-talker woman home with him.

She was his good woman many years,
Learning at last to talk like men.
But she could not tell where they had come from,
For it was too dreadfully far off.

All these things happened long ago,
When our old men's fathers were small boys.
And all men are bow-spear people now,
Hunting game easier than they used to.
And they do not make war quite so much,
For it is not very safe to fight now,—
A bow-spear can kill men too easily,
So they have to have peace some of the time.

The Galdraken's Daughter.

A STORY OF TEMPTATION.

*“No taint of sin can e’er efface
Heredity from God.”*

The Galdraken's Daughter.

A STORY OF TEMPTATION.

I.

“Fie on the witch! Fie on the witch!”

The townsmen cried as I passed them,
But fast to the ground mine eyes

Were shamed at the name,—*he* beheld me!
And never a witch am I—God help!—

Howe'er thou compel me to feign it!”
Thus did the maiden speak
To the galdraken hag in her anger.

Three score years and three

Were the years of the life of the woman;
One score years and one

Since a babe had lain at her bosom.

Yet strangely alike, as of ill-timed twins,

Were the age-worn face and the maiden's.
Each black-haired, black-eyed, black-willed,

With a vague but arrowy beauty,
Each with a gleam of new-found hope,
Each deep graven with hatred,—

Hate, like a mill of the demons,
Mill that never is weary,
Galling the heart, grinding slow,
Rending the soul forever!

“Mother, if such thou art,—”
“Aha! ha! Gronsenhilda,
A silly one thou to doubt!
Twice o’er I own thee as mother!
But come now, girl, and obey my will,
If mother or witch thou esteem me!”
“Nay, I obey thee not,
For I love him more than I fear thee,—
I deem it is love, not spite,
For I love him more than I hate thee!”

Silence again was theirs,
As hotly she turned to the window,
Silence again, but it spake
What dumb words never can utter.
Fierce for a time was the hag.
She crouched and glared at the younger,
Mingling fury with fear,
Through doubt which will were the stronger.
At last on her face was a wearied look,
Heart-sick at all she was plotting,
“Woe unto me,” she thought.
“For vengeance is sore, though cherished.
Yet long are the years I have watched for this!
My heart is gnawed with the waiting.
And now is the time! I naught will reck,
Though the heart of the girl be broken—

Stay! I once was a girl!

But no, I have sworn, I have sealed it!"

Then she arose and muttered,

And stepped to the door of the hovel,

Opened, and looked at the night,

And clenched her fist to her bosom.

Clothed in yellow and black

She stood, a statue of evil,

Plotting that bygone wrongs might live,

And innocent lives be ruined.

Shut was the door with force;

Intently she looked at the daughter,

Stepped to her side and touched her arm,

And stood for a moment in silence.

"Gronsenhilda, turn!"

And the maiden turned to confront her.

"This is the hour," the dame went on,

"To tell thee all of the secret."

"Tell, oh! tell, for I listen!" she said,

This girl, now humble and eager,

"Tell not a part, but the whole,

For I live my life in the darkness!"

"Aha! fair lady, thou fain wouldst know?

Make strong thy heart to receive it."

"Strong? I wait for the truth," she said,

And earnestly looked at the woman.

"Ah well, 'tis a story of wrong, my girl.

Methinks I'll spare thee the knowing,

For now I repent to have spoken.

'Twere better to leave it in silence."

"No, no! thou hast promised!" the maiden cried;
"I see thou'rt smiling and mocking!
Is it for naught thou livest a witch
In the eyes of them thou deceivest,—
More than a witch, a ruler of fate,—
And makest a trade of thy falsehood?
Is it for naught that I share thy shame,—
And the shame of hating a mother?
Wandering town to town,
Thou makest me live as an outcast,
Tasting of life but the dregs,
And now I have loved,—oh, Heaven!
Whence thy hate of the stranger,
To bid me wed and desert him,
Crushing his heart—for I know he loves—
And add such sin to the reckoning?"

"Hold! thou art hot," said the woman,
"I jested, refusing to tell thee,
For now is the time to reveal the whole.
Make strong thy heart to receive it!"
"Speak!" said the girl, and faced her erect,
With the scorn of her passion upon her.

"Well, 'tis a story of wrong,
Of wrong unto *thee*, my daughter.
Before thy birth thy life was accursed,
Through fault of a woman, my rival.
Wandering town to town,
Her fault, thou livest an outcast,
Tasting of life but the dregs.
And now is the time to avenge thee!



'Speak!' said the girl."

Where? She is dead long since,
But one of her blood still liveth,
Heir to her fortune and face,
And heir to the hate that I swore her.
Be thou iron at heart!

Her soul in the grave would triumph
If now I should fail of aught that I swore.
But I will not,—thou wilt obey me!
Yea, 'tis well thou art angry;
Be wroth and list to the story."

Paused for a moment the hag,
And then, speaking low, she continued:

"I was a girl long since,
The belle of a wild-tribe village.
There my mother had lived and died,
And he left me, a child among kindred,
Better in thought and hope than they;
My father was born as a Christian.

Thither he came in his youth.

My mother was fair, and he took her.
But he, too, perished; the years flew past,
And womanhood came to the orphan.

Then sweet were the joys of the tribal life;

I walked as a queen in the village;
Yet ever my heart was sundered in twain,
The wild with the tame contending.

And then one morning a stranger came,
To his home from a far place wending.

Blue were the eyes, yellow the hair.

To see him once was to mark him.
Sweet the spirit that looked from the eyes.
To see him twice was to love him!

Pausing he stood at the door of the tent
Where I was a-sitting and musing,
Asked for the road to the northern town,
And started along on his journey.
'Nay, why hasten?' I said,
'Be welcome awhile in the village.'
'Well, it is summer,' quoth he,
And seated him there as I bade him.

"Daughter, behold my face!
'Tis thine, save aged and withered.
Girl, thou'rt witchingly fair!
The stranger was held by a magic,
And I was aflame with a lifting thought,—
I had played with the swains of the village,
But now was I crossing the borders of love,
And longed to be worthy for his sake.

"We talked till the day sank low.
We parted; I wept till the morning.
I calmed with the dawning, but grieved all day,
And fled with the night from the village.
He lived in the northern town,
And there in a chapel I found him
Teaching the organ to pray.
I listened, and oh! how I loved him!
He flushed to espie me, and thought of that eve,
And ere one moon had departed
He came to the wooing. But *she* was enraged,
And vowed—ah! the lie!—that she loved him.
She stole to his heart, she stole him away,
She stole widow weeds to her bosom!

For I—me fool!—believed she had love.

I lifted the dagger and slew him!

God! that I did it! All pangs of my life

Seem pleasure save this,—but I did it!

I thought that she loved him as I knew love,

And I lived many years on the vengeance,

Merry, heart-broken, and proud.

For I thought she had reaped of her sowing,

She, a *woman*, who *knew* I was mother,

And yet had the heart to defraud me!

“Alas! I had failed as hell must fail,

For the wound healed o’er that I dealt her.

I found her again. She was nursing a babe,

And loving another as husband.

Failed! She had conquered at last!

I cried in memory’s anguish,

Cried, ‘*Let others forgive!*’

For the demon within me had mastered,

Mastered forever if need be.

Her seed shall learn of the meaning!

Twice have I proved man mortal

With steel in this hand—ha! seest?

And now will I prove if a heart may die,

And thou art the steel that shall pierce it!

Hers was a boy that she loved;

I bade her to fear for his future!

Mine was a son, but a girl I must use,—

And so thou wast born for the weapon!

The blood of my lover is in thee, girl,

Although I am damned to have borne thee!

My sin passed measure! It *could* not fail!

'Tis fate! Her son's in our power!—
Stand! faint not, O girl,
But hear to the end of my saying!
Gronsenhilda, obey me a year,
And I free thee fore'er of thy bondage!
Girl!"—But the form had fallen;
The witch knelt down all a-trembling,
Close by the side of the prostrate child,
And loosened the garment that choked her,
Muttering still strange things,
Unlawful for any to utter.

II.

At last unto life—what a life!—
The daughter returned. They parted
Each to a rag-covered couch,
With the dread of the morrow upon her.
Midnight turned in the sky.
The stars beat down on the hovel,
Peering through crannies and chinks
At the cot where the maiden was sleeping
The long, heavy slumber of sorrow.
At last in the gray of the morning
She woke, and remembered the hour
She had promised to meet with her lover,
Early, or e'er the town should awake
To spy and to sneer at the couple.

Soft as a thought she arose,
And picked out the best of her garments,

Tattered and worn, but dear to his eyes,
For wearing them first she had kissed him.
Silent she stole from the hut,
And crept like a guilty one town-ward,
Drenching her feet with the dew,
And shunning the light of the morning.
Saddest thought in the wide, wide world
Her half-dazed spirit was musing,
Even how short the infinite step
From love to forgetting or hating.
The lightning had stricken her heart,
And left it a corpse to all feeling.
"Sure I must flee," she sighed;
"If ever I wake, I shall love him."

Quickly she sped to the grove,
And there 'neath the willow she found him,
And gave him the kiss he awaited.
It glowed with a spark of emotion,
Yet not as the parting the morn before,
When lips had warmed to a crimson.
"Why are we here, my Harold,"
She solemnly said as he held her,
"Acting as though 'twere a shame
To stand so together as lovers?
Why do we meet by theft in the woods,
And not hand in hand at the altar?"
"Mary, for thus will I say,
Forgetting thy name un-christian,
Mary," he said, "speak on,
For I see thy spirit is troubled."
"Yea, I am sad, for this last time

Do we meet as lovers together,
Or else must flee. Say! lovest me yet?
Thy touch! 'Tis true thou wilt follow!"
"Mary, what flight?" he cried.
She answered him not till he wondered.
"Mary, and why art thou silent?"
He saw not the truth of her nature
Revolt, as she fashioned a lie
For the desperate need of the moment.

"Harold, the news is sad,
For I think of the home thou forsakest.
Here thou hast purchased a spot,
And the people are kind to thee—leave me!
Go thy way, I mine—
Ah! lovest me yet? Then listen.
She, that hag of the woods,
Who stole me, guarded the secret,
Called me her own, reared me in shame,
Made me a slave for the lucre,
She, that peddler of fate,
Is fled far away to the southward!
They of Arantisburg
Are tracing her out to destroy her,
Charging a crime most vile,
The theft of a babe and a treasure.
Soon they will come this way,
And slay me, too, as accomplice,
Giving thee shame to have known me.
Defend me? Turn them to reason?
Nay, doth a mob have ears?
'Tis hard to disprove I am guilty.

Go, sell quickly the land,
And meet me at eve at the Tye-spring.
Miles three hundred away,
By the sea-shore, close to the city,
There we shall dwell most safe,
And there is the place of thy boyhood.
There, not here, is our home.
Go, haste, for the hours have shortened."

And so she lied, yet scarce did sin,
For the life was turned from its channel;
And so she lied, when the naked truth
Would have swept much pain from the future.

"Mary, my woodland love,
I hasten at once at thy bidding,
For I'm but a stranger here,
And gladly will turn to the home-land.
'Tis better for thee, too, dear,
To go far hence from the hag-life,
Better than here to abide,
Where many will scoff at the wedding,
And thoughts of thy stolen youth
Will come to thee ever and ever.
Go; I'll haste to the town,
And meet thee at eve at the Tye-spring."

Thus they parted. The livelong day
She skulked all alone in the thicket,
Fearing the fall of a leaf,
For dread 'twere the step of her mother.
A veil was over her thoughts,
And a veil shall cover the story.

Meanwhile there in the town,
Believing the tale she had told him,
Quickly he sought for a buyer,
And deeded the ground for a pittance,
Making excuses vain
For going at once from the country,
Dreading arrest for he knew not what,
And praying for night and the forest.

Eve came. Straight to the woods
He stole with heavy misgiving
To do even right as a thief,
But the die was cast, and he hasted.
Scarce had he entered the road
When an unknown form in the darkness,
Hunting with gasping step
For one she had lost in the morning,
Neared him. Knowing her not,
Yet dreading to meet any, quickly
Turned he aside, paused in the brush,
And passed unseen on his journey,
Thinking of her at the spring
Till the warm love rushed to his bosom.
"Come, let us go," were his words,
As he found her standing and waiting,
Who quickened to joy at his coming.
One moment they paused, then started
Out through the weary night,
With one thought only between them,—
Hope, that lay in the path before,
And naught but forgetting behind them.



'Unseen in the twilight.'

This man was a man of home,
But he fled that night in the wildwood,
Yea, and a man of peace,
Making war on the world's conventions,
Yea, and a man of thought,
Yet he plunged in the deed unthinking;
For tender and lone his orphan heart,
Scarce knowing one maid from another,
And ardent and young was the love
That rapt him along to the action.
Happy for him if the heart prove right
That he knew so little and loved so!

Day came, night came. "Here do we rest;
This hamlet," said he, "is a shelter."
"Yond is a church," quoth she.
That night they stood at the altar.

Wait. One month is elapsed.
Look now at the door of a cottage
That stands in the face of a grove.
Far off is the blue of the ocean;
Southward domes of a city arise,
And north, the green of a mountain.
Now they are bidding good bye;
He goes to his work in the suburb,
And she to the household toil
For which she has ne'er had a training.

Weeks pass on into months;
Full many the smiles in the morning,
And many the kisses at eve;
And many the tears at the midnight!

Love is king in his heart,
And love is queen in her bosom,
But lo! those lions that couch between,
The different birth and the secret!
Yea, and the dread of the unknown thing
That the absent hag is achieving!
Oft he looks in her eyes,
And thinks he will ask for the secret;
Oft she prays for the courage to speak,
But all she can do is to kiss him!
Oft she mused to herself,
As she waited alone at the noonday:
"I am a child of hell,
And a grandchild sprung of the forest!
How can I hope to be tame,
Though ever since born I revolted,
Through some heavenly spark within,
From the hovel-bred life I was leading?
I am a wild-born thing,
And the wildness quivers within me!
One thing only could tame my thoughts,
To know that he knew of the birth-curse,—
Knew and forgave,—and the hag that bore
Were laid in the sepulchre sleeping!"

Then as she turned to the work
She nursed her a smile for the evening.
"He shall be happy awhile," she thought,
And welcomed him home for the supper.
And so that night, as many a night,
Their love grew warm in the lamplight,—
Passion, for peace stood lonely without,
And sadly knocked at the doorway!

III.

This is a beech-wood tree

That shaded the sports of the children
Who afterward went to the great crusade,
And came no more to the shelter.

Then they could clasp it around,
And climb like bears to the branches;
Now it is great and hollow with age,
A crumbling king in the forest.

In it from summery showers
Have travelers oft taken refuge;
In it the wolf has lain,
And suckled its young in the springtime;
In it have lovers kissed,
Who thought stolen waters the sweetest;
In it a hermit has dwelt for years,
While starving his soul with his body;
In it the brigand has crouched,
To seize on the innocent passer;
In it have children, lost in play,
Cried all night through for their mother.

But never a heart so strange,
And never a body so weary,
And never a will so strong has it seen
As hers who within it is sleeping,
Barefoot grown with many a mile,
And tattered with many a briar,
Old in body, and older in soul,
Grown lean with vampire hatred,—
Hate, like a mill of the demons,
Mill that never is weary,

Galling the heart, grinding low,
Ghouling the soul forever!

'Tis hers to have tasted in bitter extreme
The fires of earth's purgatory,
Cleansing the flinty will with time,
The remorse with failure in sinning,
Cleansing the heart by starving it sore,
And leaving the life but a shadow!
One thing only remains

That holds her purpose to hell-ward,
Hope in sin, for a hope still grows,
That fate's dry wind never withers.
And yet she was born for a woman,
And loathes her life of a bloodhound,
Hating because she has sworn,
Enduring because she is mighty.

Peace! let her rest for an hour.

Too soon her fire will awake her.
That is the face of her youth,
Half hid by the scars of a life-war.
That is a poise of repose.
All changes when she awakens.

She moves! and her face is drawn
Till the wrinkles change to a tightness,
And then turn wrinkles again
With a deep, dark, sinister shading.
Look! her eyes are enlarged,
And glare, as she rises and travels,
Like to a wildcat, watching her prey,
Watching and never relenting,—

Glare, then change to a faded ache,
As weariness comes with the journey.

"I shall be lost," she sighs.

"Twelve months I have hunted and wandered!
One month more will lead to the grave,
And I shall have failed of the death-price,
Even the triumph I swore to attain
Through giving my life unto evil.
Oh, for a haven to turn,
And repent of the deed I am doing!
But no! the gate of a godly life
Is barred with steel from the sinner!
I shall have spent my soul,
But I *will* not spend it for nothing!
Strength remaineth for two months more
Of searching! Sure I shall find her,
Master her mind, draw her to flight,
Leave him alone—ruined!
Yea, 'tis well she has waited,
Nor fled at the hour of the wedding.
Haply a child is born
To pluck, when lost, at his heart-strings!
What though he found some joy
In the year departed and buried?
Did Satan give apples in love
To the mother of men in the garden?

"Then will I rest; I am weary,
Weary of all things human!
Hark! I hear as it were
The voice of the daughter in anguish,

After I pass to the grave,
The mother who once might have loved her,
After the husband knows she is false,
And all men join to despise her!
God! is it this I am doing,
To make her me in the future?
Weary limbs will lead me to chase
Whatever my heart might bid them!
Poison lips will lure her to sin,
Though hell should stand and forbid it!
What! I'm mad that I whimper;
I'm glad of the day of her trouble!
Never in life she obeyed my will,
But this last time she will do it!"

Spake she, hag most piteous.
Weary she fell into silence,
Murmuring things that the woods heard not,
But the face grew hard as an arrow.
Many the towns she had tramped in vain,
And probed with the eye their windows;
Many the queries she put to the folk,
And left them gaping behind her,
Yet never a word of the girl she heard,
And never a trace of the husband.

But now the hour was come,
Though far from the home by the sea-shore,
For there in the grove she espied him,
The man she had hunted and hated,
Faring a far off journey,
And thinking of Mary behind him.



"And left them gaping behind her."

"Ha, there! child of thy mother!

Harold! Halt, for I call thee!"

Startled he looked at the face

That once seen never would leave him;

It seemed like the face of his wife

Grown old in a night and accursed.

"Woman, alas! for I know thee,

Albeit I never have seen thee!"

"Tell me, what of thy home?" she cried.

He begged with his eyes, and was silent.

"Tell me, what of thy home?"

"I love her!" was all he could answer.

"Tell me, what of thy home!"

His voice grew weak as he murmured,

"Oh, I thought thou stolest the girl!

I thought she spake to me truly!"

"Tell me! wouldest thou know

Of aught that her lips never uttered?"

"Oh!" he cried with a piteous look,

As a dog that fawns on its master.

"Hast thou, Harold, the heart

To endure the tale I will tell thee?"

"Why! What tale?" were his words,

But his eyes laid hold of her meaning.

"Thy visage is wine to my veins!" she cried.

"I am eating the ghost of thy mother!

Hast thou a craving to hear?"

He faltered before he made answer,

"'Tis better that she who loves me tell it,

If aught I should know lieth hidden."

"Loves thee! Where are thy wits,

If thou thinkest my daughter will tell thee,

Before her hand she has wrenched from thine,
And left thee alone to thy sorrow!"

Bewildered he stood, and the moment had come
To snatch from his fingers the paper
That long she had eyed, a letter unscaled.

The writing was that of her daughter,
Bearing the date and address.

She kissed it as though 'twere an idol.
"What art thou doing!" he cried,

As strength returned for a moment;
"Woman, give hither the letter,
And know thy place in the future!"

"Take it!" She scornfully tossed it over.

"'Tis naught to me now but a plaything!
And wilt thou none of my story?

Away, and follow thy journey,
And never unravel the tale of thy birth
And of hers who seemeth to love thee!
Drink thy cup in the dark,

For I deem thou'lt never believe me!"

"What! thou visage of ill," he gasped,

"Turn back, although I deplore thee!
Although I believe thee little,

My soul doth itch for the story!"

And then she was ready to speak,

Having charmed her prey like a serpent,
Coiling nearer and nearer his heart,

And quaffing revenge in his anguish.

All the story of youth,

Meeting and loving and losing,

All the story of sin,

The murder, the hatred, the incest,

All the plot for his ruin she told,
Calmly, fully, and slowly.
"Lo, I have ended!" she said.
"The daughter did fancy thee truly,
And fled to avoid my decree,
But now she has learned to distaste thee.
Make no haste to thy home;
Little joy awaits thy returning!"

Saying, she leaped from the path,
And quickly was lost in the bushes,
Leaving the man to loiter amazed,
Unsettled and doubting his senses,
Yet quiet and calm, for like as a stone
Will sink when tossed in the water,
But glances, driven with force,
Her blow had missed of its purpose.
"This is too fearful a thing to be true,"
Was all of his thought for a moment.

And yet that danger he dared not fear
Was nearing his wife like a panther.
Haste thee, man, to thy home,
And let none evil outrun thee!

IV.

The cottage was open at eve
To look at the glow of the twilight.
Mary was sitting and crooning the babe,
And a neighbor standing beside her,
The motherly dame of the nearest home,
A furlong nigher the city.

"Mary, good neighbor," she said,
When done with trivial matters,
"A thing most curious Richard relates
From Dennburg, when he was trading.
A woman gone mad and staring at men
He met on the streets of the village,
And yet, as he stoutly affirms,
With a likeness for thee, pleasant neighbor.
'Tis odd, this likeness of strangers,"
She said, and smiled at her story.
"Odd, to be sure," said Mary,
Grown pale unobserved in the twilight;
"A thing quite similar comes to me now
Of the pussy we keep for a mouser.
Her tail's cut short, and the left ear's black,
But the right one white as her body;
And once this fall on the skirts of the city
I met with a kitten just like her!"

They laughed, and Mary went on,
"Good neighbor, let's walk on the sea-shore.
This boy has fallen asleep.
All day I have kept to the cottage."
She laid him to rest in the cradle,
And wandered along to the water,
Speaking of things in a pensive way,
In accord with the shimmering landscape.

"Good night," at the last they said,
But Mary returned to the ocean,
Pouring her heart to the waves,
And dreading no ear in the darkness.

“My mother gone wild with the search!
I thought, once fled, to elude her,—
Chasing a bubble of love
That I dare not touch with the finger!
Oh, my words! my words!
That I dare not say to my husband!
Why does he tarry so long?
He thought to return in a fortnight.
Why does he leave me alone?
Perchance he is happier yonder!
For I’m but a restive, wild-born thing;
He’s weary of trying to tame me,
Trying to cage me rather,
And teach me to sing for his pleasure!
Oh, I’m lonely to death,
And no heart knows I am lonely!
Why am I thus? Ah me!
His mother, alas, was the reason!
Save for her I had never drawn breath,
And would I had never, never!”

She wandered and looked at the waves;
She turned and looked at the forest,
Started for home, and loitered again,
And turned once more to the water.
A horror she knew not whence
Had crept and gathered around her.
’Twas only a toad that leaped;
She cowered as though ’twere a serpent.
A leaf fell, touching her hand;
She quivered as though ’twere an arrow.
Yonder, lo! in the path
The eyes of a woman were on her.

Like to a tiger ready to spring,
And lashing the ground as it waited.

“Gronsenhilda, joy be thine!
I've heard those words thou hast uttered!
Thy bubble of love is broken at last!
Our hearts are as one forever!
Merry and good is the life we'll lead,
When done is the life-long vengeance!
We shall return to the dwellings of men,
And wander never in sadness!
Just one hour, one, my girl,
Be flinty of will, and assist me!
Come! lead on to his home,
And make it a cry and a hissing!”

Her power of mind drew hard
With cords spun strong through a lifetime.
They started. Dark was the night,
And clouds grew denser above them.
They stumbled o'er weeds in the path,
And tore their skirts on the briar.
Hearts beat heavy and fast,
And breath came short like a runner's.

“Tell me, mother, I pray!
What of the babe in the cradle?”
“Babe? Thou lovest it not!
'Tis born the pledge of a falsehood!
Half is the father's share;
Leave half of the corpse at the doorway!”
“Nay, but give me the child
To suckle and rear unto manhood!

Woe unto me! and woe!

And where shall I turn for a refuge—”

“Hush! my daughter, and hush!

I give thee the life of the infant.”

Still they hasted along,

But only a moment in silence.

“Tell me, mother, if *true*,

That horror thy lips once uttered!”

“Daughter, if such thy heart

That, being it true, thou avenge it,

Then it is true; if other thy heart,

I'll lie, and say it was falsehood!

Speed! Thy frenzy is precious!

I'll share thee the joy of the triumph!

Speed! for the time is short, too short,

And now we are hot for the doing!”

“Why too short, my mother?

Dost think he is nigh to returning?”

“Haste! I only will cry, make haste!

This hour is fate's own birthday!”

Gasping still they struggled along;

Their eyes were hid in the darkness,

And only the breath betokened the pain,

The tread, their desperate frenzy.

Look! for here is the bend of the road,

And yonder the path to the cottage.

“See! 'tis the light in the window!”

The wild wife, trembling, remem'bring,

“See! 'tis the light in the window!” cried,

“*His* light, too soon to be darkened!”

"Hush! say naught of the light!

Come on, my child, I am with thee!

What! Thou'rt fallen? Arise!"

She seized and lifted the younger,
Who fled as a deer from the hounds,

Outrunning the hag to the doorway.

"O God! or *never* give help!" she cried,

Leaped in, and bolted the entrance.

"Traitor!" the outside darkness wailed,

But panels of oak were between them!

Oh, that night, that night!

'Twas a hinge, and life turned upon it!

"Awake, my baby, and listen!

Be old for an hour to console me!

I am alone and weary,

And trembling seizeth upon me!

But oh, I have broken the meshes of fate!

The spider no more shall entrap me!

Nay, my babe, thou art young;

Come hither and feed from my bosom!

Mother doth love thee, baby of mine,

And father shall know that I love thee!"

Oh, but the night grew long,

And horror was nigh in the darkness!

Something rattled the door;

The young wife started in terror,

Found her a knife and waited

To die in defence of the hearth-stone.

Something peered at the window,

And stood half seen in the lamplight,



"See! 'tis the light in the window!"

Hollow as eyes of a mask
Cast off and hung in a graveyard!
Something stepped on the walk,
And rustled the boughs of the cedar,
Something hissed in the chimney,
And scattered the soot and the ashes!
Something wailed far off in the night,
Like hell's troops gathering slowly!
"Give me the morn!" she prayed,
"Or give me tears to relieve me!
The night is killing my reason—
Hush! my heart, be quiet,
For evil has come and fired its darts,
And flees with the quiver all empty!

O my husband, return,
Although I am timid to meet thee!
One more river awaits my feet,
To tell him all I have hidden;
Strength has come for the trial at last,
Although he should never forgive me.
Grant me, Heaven, my husband's love,
And slay those lions between us!"

"Now I can sleep," she thought,
"But first I will look through the window."
Fear had perished, and pity was hers
At a sight she beheld in the dawning.
Like as a beetle that flies at a flame
From afar, from the outside darkness,
Scorched by the blaze it thought to enjoy,
Drops down and crawls on the flooring,

Seeking a lonely grave
In the dust and dirt of a corner,
So her mother, purpose destroyed,
Was creeping in pain to the mountain.

V.

She slept, this daughter of sorrow,
As real life opened before her,
Slept as a babe will sleep,
New born into life out of chaos.
Noon came. Still she was resting,
But soon was aroused by the infant,
Crying for hourly care.
The sun fell bright on the carpet,
And all things round her glowed with the light
That answered the warmth in her bosom ;
Warmth? Yes, courtship anew,
With all of its doubts, misgivings,
With all its terrible shyness,
And endless ebbing and flowing,
With all its fervor that drives it to speak,
Was slowly returning upon her.

An hour of thought slipped by.
She thrilled with a sudden emotion,
Knowing the step at the door, his step,
And hearing the voice of her husband,
"Mary, come hither, my wife!"
"My husband!" as swift he embraced her.
He scanned her face like a book,
And read there faithful endeavor,

And something mystic and new withal;
Her eyes were timid and downcast.
Sitting together they waited and clung,
And each sought words that he found not.

“Harold,” she struggled at last to say,
And her heart tossed wildly within her,
“I am abased in ashes and dust,
And scarce can I plead, ‘Forgive me!’
Something ever I sinned to hide,
Yet feared heart’s death should I tell it,
Something terrible, sharp as a knife
To sunder lover and lover!
O my husband, kiss me again!
Perchance thou never wilt love me!”
Thus far speaking, she fell into tears
To see him smiling upon her,
Sadly, tenderly, thankful at heart
To find his petition so answered.
She, his wife, had broken the lock
That fastened her soul from its lover!

“Mary, speak and tell me the whole,
But fear no evil in telling.
Methinks I have heard thy story,
And find no need to forgive thee,
Seeing thine eyes, sweet pledge of the trust
That once I craved but I found not!
Speak, make easy thy heart.
Thy lips shall give me the story.”
“What, my lover! and what hast thou heard,
And still canst hold me and love me?”

And thus he told her the whole,
How once in the years of his childhood,
When father had left him asleep,
And mother was sobbing and crying,
He woke and crept to the door,
And heard things never forgotten,
Though ne'er understood, (so young!)
How one she had crossed in her girlhood
Found her, cursed her, gave her to fear
That the life of her boy was ruined,
If ever that woman with witch-like craft
Should live to finish her plotting.

"But never," he said, "though puzzled in love,
Did I link my wife with the story,
Until one night in the spring
I heard thee tossing and sighing,
Moaning in sleep strange things
Of 'vengeance' and 'pity the stranger!'
I doubted, and something sealed my lips.
Forgive me ne'er to have asked thee!"

Then did he tell her the morn in the woods,
The hag, her sinister feature,
All her story of sin,
That smacked on her lips like a morsel,
All her scorn and vaunted revenge,
That left him wondering, hoping,
Trembling at last lest horror be true,
And ruin await his returning.
"Tell me, Mary, the truth."
"It is true," she replied. "O husband,

I am abased and covered with shame
To think I have looked in the chasm,
Lingered, and stumbled, and none but God
Has saved me here till the morning!"

Then she told him the night just passed.
They knelt and prayed in the sunlight.
Something smiled in heaven above
To see them bowing together,
As all the love they had stifled in fear
Gasped forth into life in a moment.

"Come," she said, "let us go to the mountain,
For there one suffereth lonely,
Broken in body and heart,
And what though I hated and feared her?
Come, my Harold." "Yea, dear wife,
Lead on; I gladly will follow."
And so with a hand in hand
They followed the path to the mountain,
Carrying softly the boy,
Bereft no more of his birthright.
They traveled. Nature was glad,
And tuned her heart with the joyous.
Birds sang; nature was glad,
But it mocked if any had sorrow!
They climbed by the path of the goat,
That seldom was trod by a human,
Grasping the bushes and picking their way,
For ahead in the earth there were footprints.
Like as an elephant, sick unto death,
Forsaketh the band of his fellows,

Labors alone through Afric's woods,
Nor dares to rest in his journey,
Hastening on to deposit his tusk
Where the bones of his kindred are bleaching;
So this woman in life's last hour
Had crept far above to the mountain,
Seeking a grave where none might know
But Solitude, friend of her girlhood.

So she awaited her death,
But death not so was her portion,
For there at the foot of the cliff
The couple had come with the infant.
And searched now this way, that way;
Along where the rock overhangeeth
They found her. Strange was the look
When eye met eye and remembered!

"Come," she whispered, "for I am a shadow!
Ye need not trample upon me!
Something has brought you hither.
I'm willing to speak, I am willing!"
"Mother, 'tis pity that brought," she said,
"For I am a link in the fetter
That bound thee fast to despair,
And now I am fain to release thee.
Wilt thou, canst thou listen?"
"Too late, my child; it is over!
Once I was married to hate,
And now, hate's widow, I perish!
Sir! thou hast courted my daughter,
And stolen her heart till it loves thee,

Hast made it a rose, not a thorn ;
And now that I must,—I forgive thee !

“Come, bring hither the babe.
I dare not take it and kiss it,
For fear some strength return to my hands,
And I pluck it asunder in madness ;
But lay it across my feet,
That so I may feel of its body,
And so in the years to come
Thou tell him his grandmother knew him.
Thus!—And, sir, bring hither—
Thy hand? Nay! only the kerchief
Whereon thou hast wept; across mine eyes,
Come, lay it, a token of meeting.
Thus!—And, sir, that mother of thine
Was less of a fiend than I feigned her!
Ah! it has sapped my strength,
This speaking! Now it is over.
Bury me here in the mountain,
And let no monument name me.
Fare you well!” She had finished.
Her breath sank low till it perished,
And thus her wandering life was o’er.
The white cloth covered her features.

Silence, silence and hush!
They arose and buried her softly,
Saving her last-told wish.
They marked on the cliff, “One resteth.”
“Husband,” Mary began,
“This night we abide on the mountain.”

"Yea, dear heart, it is well," he said.

They laid them down in the shelter,
And looked at the ocean sun,

That sank and reddened the heavens.
Southward spires of the city arose,

And glowed in the light of the even.
Down in the vale, half hid in the grove,

Behold their haven, the cottage,
While all the earth had pensive repose,
And spoke of the heart that warmed it.

"Harold, a new thing comes to my lips!

I love my mother who bore me!
All her life was sundered in twain,
The fierce with the pity contending,
And pity has conquered at last,

Yet so as by fire, my husband!"

"Mary," he softly said,

"Thy words bring peace that endureth!
Behold yon love in the sky!"

Then silence reigned till the even.
Night stole softly around them,
Anointing the earth with its beauty,
And still they rested in love's sweet dream,
The first day of heaven for mortals.

Lyrics of a Life.

Lyrics of a Life.

CRADLE SONG.

Sleep, my babe,
Ere the sun mount high,
Or it cometh the day
After dreaming-time.

Sleep, my babe,
In the cool of life ;
Too soon thou must wake
When it's weeping-time.

Years they are many
Of nobling strife
Ere the hoary rest
Of the evening-time,

And the evening twilight's
Hush—oh, stay !
Mother is by thee,
Sleep, my babe !

A CHILD'S PRAYER.

Dear God, kiss mamma good night for me,
'Cause you know she's gone away.
It's the first time ever she's went off
To stay away all day.

And it's awful lonesome here, you know,
When mamma's not at home.
I just can't have my good night kiss,
I'se got to go 'sleep all alone.

So, please, You kiss her good night for me
And say who it's from, and then—
Oh! now I guess you'se done it, dear God!
Thank you. Good night. Amen!

QUESTIONINGS.

I stand at the threshold of life,
The pathway dimly I see,
Dawning sense of a childhood flown,
Sense of a future nigh, unknown.
Ah! what is in store for me?

Where is the girl—now born—
Whom as yet I never have seen?
Where is the home so fair
That as yet is only a dream?
Where is the heart to endure
If the valley be deep with sorrow?
Where is the lantern? Whither my feet,
To-morrow, ay! to-morrow?

A LIFE ALONE.

The earth was singing with nesting birds
When the little leaves open and curl,
But a bird of the other world came nigh,
And left two eggs of pearl.

Now one was broke by a careless foot,
The other one basked in the heat,
And the little bird came and grew and throve,
And its twitter was heavenly sweet.

But all of its life it mourned and pined
At morning and noon and late,
And it sang, "Oh, where? Oh, where? Oh, where?
My mate! my mate! my mate!"

LENORA.

What of thy soul, Lenora?
Is it the soul I love?
Is it the one that has waited for me,
I for thee,
Led by the power above?

Dare I to dream, Lenora,
What I have guessed be true?
Welding heat 'neath the maiden smile,
Bashful guile,
Hiding a treasure new?

SONG IN IONIC RHYTHM.

In the night-time, in the night-time,
When the night-bird is a-lonely,
For a hushed love I am longing,
For a long love I am yearning.
In the darkness, in the stillness,
I am longing, I am yearning
For the soft breast of my dear one,
For the warm bosom of my loved one.
In the night-time, in the night-time,
When the air breathes at the window,
For a still kiss I am longing,
For a long kiss I am praying;
In the darkness, in the stillness,
I am longing, I am praying
For a love-clasp most holy,
For a silence most true.

I have found thee, I have found thee,
My beloved one, mine espoused!
And the night air bringeth perfume,
And the night-bird singeth softly;
In the darkness, in the stillness,
I am nestling, I am praying
On the pure breast of my new one,
On the warm bosom of mine own one!
I have found thee, I have learned thee,
For thy heart heaves to caress me!
With a warm kiss I have pressed thee,
With a long kiss I have hushed thee!
In the dark night, in the long night
I have found thee, I have learned thee;
I am clasping thy heart-throbs
In the silence so true!

A CRY.

Oh! let me not die yet,
O God, for I have not loved!
O God, for I have not loved!
What was is now no more,—
Not saved on the yonder shore,
But faded, turned to naught!
But faded, turned to naught!
God! let me not die yet!

I fain would live
Till life doth give—
Ah me!
Ah me!
Some flower's birth
To take from earth,—
Ah me, if not!
Ah me!

BIRTH AND THE POET.

God sent the poet pain—he knew not why.
He humbly spake, and when the hour was o'er
His bosom swelled, remembering not the woe,
For joy that a song was born into the world.

A BACHELOR'S LONGING.

I am without a compass. Plans may come,
May go, how best to cross the sea of life.
This port, yon haven—hither, there I turn.
O lover, come, to be my guiding star!

I scan the world of faces; none reply.
My love for love goes baffled all the day.
Unmated still I wander. Life flows by.
O lover, come, to be my guiding star!

WHEN PATIENCE STARVES.

As tender shepherd cares for helpless flock,
With shelter, food, protection, words of love,
That he may reap the wool for selfish gain—
Oh, dare I ask if God be such to us?

As farmer careth for his fattening swine,
With surfeitings of food and swinish joy,
To make more carcass for the butcher's knife—
Oh, dare I ask if God be such to us?

As men of worth, who claim to live by love,
Will set decoys and shoot the innocent wild,
To taste the joy of power, wanton sport—
Oh, dare I ask if God be such to us!

THE RETURN OF FAITH.

Spirit aweary?

Face thy doubt.

Heavy the heart-ache?

Wander without.

Long is the life-ache?

Lost thy God?

Look and behold thy dawn.

Sweet is the moonlight,

God, thou'rt there!

Sweet is the snow-light,

God, thou'rt fair!

Sweet is the faith-light

Dawning afar,

Deep, undreampt in the heart.

ABASHED.

Let triflers tell their passion undismayed.

With heart that crieth, dumb with love I stand,

Most dreading what I crave. To falter still

I'm not ashamed, nor fear to fail at last :

For even God, abashed to tell His love,—

The love He craved—restrained His waiting hand

From making man, his doubtful heart to woo,

Till half of all eternity was past.

THREE GREETINGS.

In thine a stranger's hand.
Thou feelst the touch,
It is not much ;
Naught concealing,
Naught revealing,
Thine own, his fingers folded o'er,
Can feel the flesh, and little more ;
For human brotherhood one kindly thrill,
And then and flesh and heart are still.

In thine a lover's hand.
'Tis not the flesh alone doth press,
The soul doth through the flesh confess.
Naught concealing,
All revealing,
Thy hand in thorough peace doth rest.
No doubt creeps in between the fingers pressed.

But think how one time there it lay,
Half disclosing, half dissembling,
Trembling lest it give away
The secret of its trembling.
Half in pleasure, half in fright,
The heart its bounding hushes.
'Twixt caring naught and fearing naught
Is the realm of dread and blushes.

AT REST.

My hand I lay in thine, my love,—
 A tired hand, that long has striven,
 A restless hand, forever driven;
My hand I lay in thine, my love,
And rest which floweth from above,
 To us is given,
 To us is given.

My heart to thine, my own, I press,—
 Once tossing heart, by tumult riven,
 Once lonely heart, no anchor given!
My heart to thine, my own, I press,
While peace which Heaven stoops to bless
 To us is given,
 To us is given.

My lips on thine shall rest, my dear,—
 These faltering lips, that ill have spoken,
 These yearning lips, that crave a token;
My lips on thine shall rest, my dear.
That perfect love which casts out fear
 To us is given,
 To us is given.

THE LOVE-LIGHT.

Like sunshine fair, so shineth love.
As light to earth is given,
So love to life, that we may see
Earth's toil illumed of heaven.

But gaze not always at the sun,
However fair, it blindeth !
'Tis earth,—with landscape, flower and sky,—
Through light its beauty findeth.

And dream not simply of love's vows,
Caresses long and tender,
'Tis life's hard task and commonest round,
Love's light shall beauteous render !

LOVER'S PUZZLE.

I have a pair of eyes, oh, yes!

They're black, though mine are born blue, 'tis strange;

Can you guess the riddle of such a change?

Can you guess? Can you guess? Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

Any lover should guess!

The black that are mine because they're thine,

Whatever of good they see,

Of pure and of true, whatever it be,

E'en so by me shall accounted be,

For what my blindness never would see

Thou, my seer, shalt find for me.

Thy seeings, love, are mine.

And the blue eyes, too, that I keep for you

Naught that's by or forbidden shall view,

Naught that's stranger to love's own law,

Naught that the black would blush if they saw,

For love is pure and true.

GOD OF THE MOONLIGHT.

God of the moonlight, God of the light!
Strange is the beauty around me to-night.
Out through the window my vision is ravished;
Over the earth a richness is lavished.
Soft through the trees the radiance streams;
Flecked are the leaves with the willowy beams.
Such is the earth, in glory bedight,
God of the moonlight, God of the light!

God of the moonlight, God of the light!
Sorrow and doubt have taken their flight.
Down from above the brightness is pouring;
Gently from care a spirit is soaring.
All is peace in the valley of doubt;
All is at rest in the world without.
Is it the earth, or heaven in sight,
God of the moonlight, God of the light?

God of the moonlight, God of the light!
I am alone but happy to-night.
Now through the soul tender longings are flitting;
Here at my side no loved one is sitting,
No loved fingers pressing my own,—
Ah! in this world I am not alone!
SHE is remembering! all will be right,
God of the moonlight, God of the light!

A SONG OF TIDE.

The ocean of water is full, is full !
When billows break along the shore,
Majestic with tempestuous roar,
And tide advances more and more,
The ocean of water is full.

The ocean of water is always full.
Though billows cease to plunge and leap,
And silence reigns o'er all the deep,
Though tide sinks low adown the steep,
The ocean is really full.

The ocean of love is full, is full !
When fervent glows the throbbing heart,
And thrills of rapture start and dart,
When spirits vow no more to part,
The ocean of love is full.

That ocean of love is always full.
When life is calm, with nothing new,
E'en dark with sorrow's somber hue,
If purpose bideth fast and true,
The ocean is really full.

LOVERS' RICHES.

Is it for us that the katydid sings,
 My dearest, O my dearest?
Is it for us that the twilight glows
Soft on the trees, and the moonlight flows,
Down through the daylight's 'minishing tide,
While we are wandering, side by side,
 My dearest, O my dearest!

Is it for us that the darkness falls,
 My dearest, O my dearest?
Is it for us that the hush is long,
Sweeter, stiller for the night-bird's song,
Caroling afar where his loved ones bide,
While we are listening, side by side,
 My dearest, O my dearest!

Is it for us that the dawn comes gray,
 My dearest, O my dearest?
Is it for us that the clouds hang low,
Falling in raindrops, pattering slow,
Soothing and wooing the heart to rest,
While we are safe in the small home nest,
 My dearest, O my dearest!

Is it for us that the snow lies fair,
My dearest, O my dearest?
Is it for us that the sun breaks through,
Purpling the shadows to dreamland's hue,
Bearing the heart on phantasy's wings,
Leading us on to the soul of things,
My dearest, O my dearest!

L'ENVOI.

Why is earth if not for purpose?
What its purpose but a soul?
We are rich, in full possession
Of creation's answering whole.

SWEET JEALOUSY.

Mary, my only love,
Shall I crown thee mother and queen?
Thou'lt love the child, not me,
Oh Mary, Mary, Mary!

Ay, Mary, my only love,
So be, for thy heart shall grow
Till half be better than all,
Dear Mary, Mary, Mary!



BABY MAY.

I am a little dead baby,
But I haven't been born in vain,
I've brought to the earth a little message,
In through the gates of pain.

For what is a life for, anyway,
Worthy of an honest pride,
If it isn't to leave things better
Because we have lived and died?

And that I have done already;
People's hearts are tenderer grown;
They think stiller thoughts and sweeter
Because I have come and flown.

BEREAVEMENT.

'Tis night, and distance that o'erwhelms the soul
Before us is. On to its goal

The swift-winged ray the mighty span has made
With distant tidings lade:

"That star is far, is far! Oh, spare the tear,
For there and here

One Love controls!" In fervent, mute appeal
I kneel;

I upward gaze in wonder unexpressed,

Poor human sight is lost in space—He knoweth best!

I find in presence of the Mighty One a perfect rest.

TIME.

Time—it is long and stern and strong,
Relentless and wise and kind.

Hope—it is true, ever bubbling anew.

'Twill some day the answer find.

OPTIMISM.

A moment of joy is given,
I love thee, moment of joy.
Pure gold from the throne of the Heavens,
Earth-tinged with a precious alloy.

The alloy of a past now conquered,
Though heavy with pain and woe;
The alloy of a grief-flecked future,
That waiteth upon me, I know.

Earth-tinged, yes, akin to me mortal,
A child of my life, my own.
Made bold, my faith I will utter
How weal for the ill doth atone.

The good is a bit of the changeless,
The ill with the bearing is done.
The ill is the sweat of the running,
The good is the goal that is won.

Though the scales of the hour weigh falsely,
The scales of forever are true.
'Twere well though one should await thee,
Rare moment, a whole life through.

One only? Nay, many are given,
But each, unique and alone,
Outweighs all sorrow and sighing,
When the Sum of the Ages is known.

NOONDAY.

Battles and battles and wars!
Mid-life is a harvest of wars!

War with the famishing wolf,
War with the doubts and fears,
War with the lust of the flesh,
War with the weakening years—

Victory, wreaths and rest!
The eve is a time for rest.

THE JOY OF TRYING.

My ambitions came and kissed me. Flown, ah! flown
Are they, save thee, my very little one—
And thee! I could not follow them their flight.
To others they are gone, who, nobly led,
Shall soar the mountain o'er, where I have failed.
I'm proud and glad they came to woo me, too.
Unknown, I'm brother to the victors there!

OLD AGE.

Oh! let me grow like such an olive tree!
I saw it oft on Attica's dry plain—
So gnarled and thick, so pierced with honorable holes,
The dignity of ages in its mien;
Stub two yards high, all obsolete branches gone,
Yet putting forth young fruitful boughs each year.

LIFE ETERNAL.

The candle flared in the wee, small breeze ;
It fluttered and gasped for breath,
And darkness broke where the light had shone,
For the wind had blown it to death.

But what was the light? Was it that poor flame
That leaped for a time and died?
Or is it the beam that still speeds on
Through the universe dark and wide?

Not lost, though shifting, the place of its birth
It leaveth for paths untried,
And the eyes of the stars now see it in turn,
And shall, while the heavens abide.

So what is a life? Is it that frail breath
That moveth awhile our clay?
Or is it the soul, the thinking thought,
That liveth and moveth for aye?

THE DEPARTED.

Dead! 'Tis a nameless thing, and o'er my grave
The mournful pine is tossing. Breezes dried
Their tears who loved me, fallen free; and wild,
Love-tokening roses bloom and mold away.
Now faithful hearts are chastened. Hope have they
Of future clasping. Wonder steals if I
E'en now remember, cherish—seeking light
Where man must know through symbols more than vague.

I wake to the other world, but dream of earth,
True dreams of all ye do or be, for rest
E'en here in heaven doth intervene when o'er
The raptured throbbings are, ere sweet return.
'Tis a dream of a dream doth bless thee sleeping, when
Heaven-beckoning, I am with thee, dear, once more.

TALENTS.

If you were a star, pray what would you do?
If I were a star, I'd shine.
If you were a vine, then what would you do?
I'd climb, if I were a vine.
If you were a dew-drop, what would you do?
If a dew-drop I were, I'd diamond a flower.
If you were a rainbow, what would you do?
If a rainbow were I, I'd smile from the shower.
Whatever we were, we'd do our best,
And leave to our Father in heaven the rest;
Whatever we be, we'll do His will,
And trust to His loving-kindness still.

THE END.

1919

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